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THE CENTURY BIBLE

JEREMIAH
AND
LAMENTATIONS

THE CENTURY BIBLE

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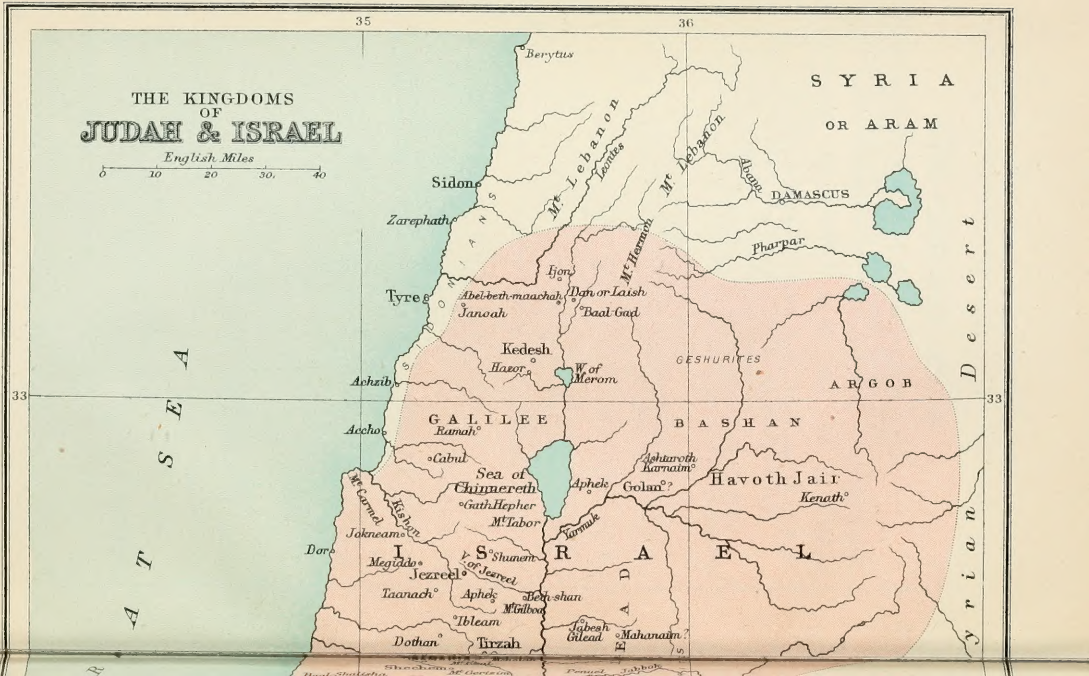

THE KINGDOMS OF JUDAH & ISRAEL

English Miles
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10
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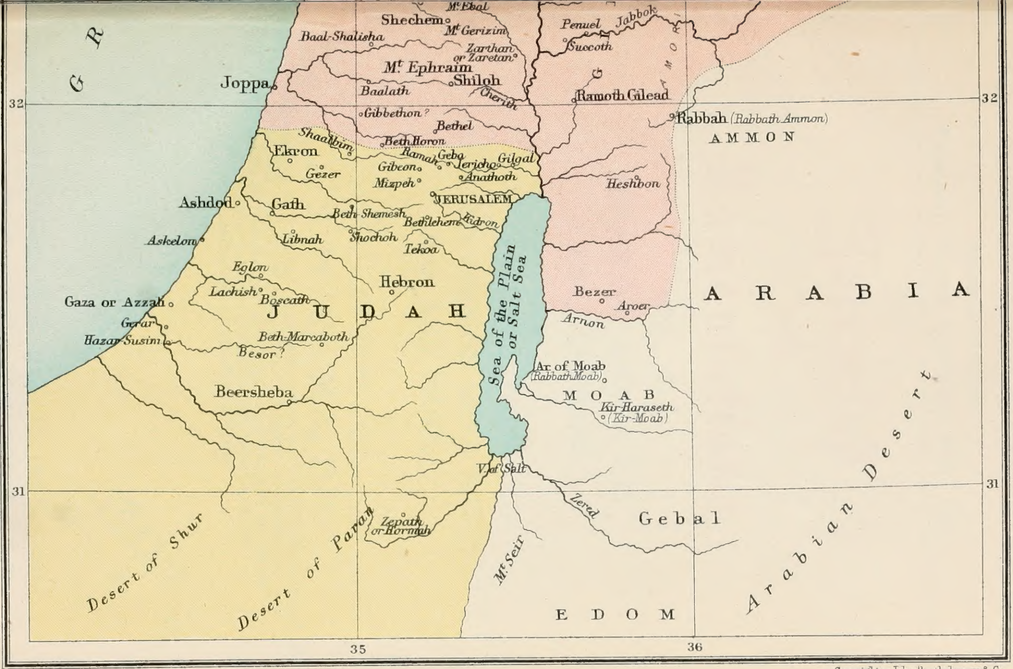
36
33
SYRIA
OR ARAM
DAMASCUS
Abana
Pharpar
Desert
Syrian
Berytus
Sidon
Zarephath
Tyre
SIDONIANS
Mt. Lebanon
Leontes
Mt. Lebanon
Mt. Hermon
Ijon
Abel-beth-maachah
Dan or Laish
Baal-Gad
Janoah
Kedesh
Hazor
W. of Merom
GESHURITES
ARGOB
Achzib
Accho
GALILEE
Ramah
BASHAN
Cabul
Sea of Chinnereth
Ashtaroth Karnaim
Havoth Jair
Aphek
Golan?
Kenath
Mt. Carmel
Kishon
Gath Hepher
Mt. Tabor
Yarmuk
Jokneam
Dor
ISRAEL
Shunem
Megiddo
V. of Jezreel
Jezreel
Taanach
Aphek
Beth-shan
Mt. Gilboa
GAD
Ibleam
Jabesh Gilead
Mahanaim?
Dothan
Tirzah
Shechem
Penuel
Jabbok
SEA


G R
Joppa
Shechem
Mt Ebal
Mt Gerizim
Baal-Shalisha
Zarthan or Zaretan
Mt Ephraim
Shiloh
Baalath
Cherith
Gibbethon ?
Bethel
Beth Horon
Shaalbim
Ramah
Geba
Jericho
Gilgal
Gibeon
Anathoth
Ekron
Gezer
Mizpeh
JERUSALEM
Ashdod
Gath
Beth-Shemesh
Bethlehem
Kidron
Askelon
Libnah
Shochoh
Tekoa
Eglon
Hebron
Lachish
Boscath
Gaza or Azzah
J U D A H
Gerar
Hazar-Susim
Beth-Marcaboth
Besor ?
Beersheba
Sea of the Plain or Salt Sea
V. of Salt
Zepath or Hormah
Desert of Shur
Desert of Paran
Mt Seir
E D O M
Penuel
Jabbok
Succoth
A M O R
G
Ramoth Gilead
Rabbah (Rabbath Ammon)
AMMON
Heshbon
Bezer
Aroer
Arnon
A R A B I A
Ar of Moab (Rabbath Moab)
M O A B
Kir-Haraseth (Kir-Moab)
Zered
Gebal
Arabian Desert
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The Century Bible

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Jeremiah
and
Lamentations

VOL. II
JEREMIAH XXV to LII
LAMENTATIONS

INTRODUCTION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
MAP AND INDEX

EDITED BY

A. S. PEAKE, M.A., D.D.

ANDS PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL EXEGESIS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
TUTOR IN THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST COLLEGE, MANCHESTER, AND
LECTURER IN LANCASHIRE INDEPENDENT COLLEGE; SOMETIME
FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE, AND LECTURER IN
MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

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PREFACE

In sending forth the second volume of this work I desire to renew my thanks to the scholars named in the Preface of the first volume, and add an expression of gratitude to those whose writings have been helpful for the Commentary on Lamentations, especially Löhr, Budde, and Cheyne.

I am grateful for the cordial welcome which the first volume has received, and trust that its successor may be equally fortunate. I should like, however, to take this opportunity of meeting some criticisms which have been urged in a friendly spirit by two competent reviewers. Prof. Jordan (*Review of Theology and Philosophy*, vol. vi) thinks that it would have been an improvement to print the 'poems of Jeremiah' in parallel lines. But this would have been to depart from the practice which obtains in the series; it would have made demands on space that could be ill afforded; and the permission to print the Revised Version hardly included the permission to rearrange it. And where a text has been so expanded by glosses as is often the case with ours, the attempt to indicate poetical structure could not be satisfactorily carried through; since the poetical form could not be indicated unless the glosses were removed from the text. But in a work like the present the editor has no right to tamper with the Revisers' text. What Prof. Jordan wishes is an admirable object in itself; but could be legitimately attained only in an independent translation.

On the criticism that too much space is taken up for the quotation of conflicting opinions I may say that my practice was adopted quite deliberately. It is an injustice to the student for an editor to impose his own view, which may be wrong, upon him, without giving him warning that eminent authorities take a different view. And in a Commentary on Jeremiah it is specially incumbent on the writer to observe this rule, in view of the very important work recently done on the book, which is not accessible to the English reader; of the new problems which have been raised; and the fact that much information required by students in Universities and Colleges is as yet provided for them in English nowhere else.

My friend Prof. Bennett finds my treatment of Jeremiah and the Chaldean party more one-sided than what I should have given in a more technical work (*Review of Theology and Philosophy*, August, 1911). Anything he said on an Old Testament subject would always claim my careful attention; but especially would this be the case in a subject where he has himself done such admirable work. It is one of the misfortunes incident to the piecemeal publication of this work, that impressions have been made by the summary statement in the Introduction to the first volume, which would perhaps have been removed by the qualifications which are given in the second volume. I have left my notes on the episode of Hananiah as they were written before Prof. Bennett's review appeared; and I trust that he will feel that I have done full justice to Hananiah's sincerity. But I cannot retreat from my conviction that Jeremiah (I say nothing of 'the Chaldean party,' of which I know next to nothing) was entirely in the right in the policy he laid down. Here, I fear, there is a real difference between us; but I hope my judgement is not warped by the hero-worship to which I am happy to plead guilty.

ARTHUR S. PEAKE.

December 15, 1911.

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THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

CHAPTERS XXV–LII

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

JEREMIAH

[R] THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the **25**

XXV. JUDGEMENT ON JUDAH AND THE NATIONS AT THE HAND OF THE CHALDEANS.

With this chapter we return from the reign of Zedekiah to that of Jehoiakim. The fourth year of that monarch, to which the oracle is assigned, was a critical year not merely for the prophet and for Judah but for universal history. In it Jeremiah received his commission to collect all his prophecies, that the people might have an opportunity of escaping by amendment of life from the evil which Yahweh purposed against them. In this year, according to xlvi. 2 (though it may have been a year earlier : see note on xxv. 1), the battle of Carchemish took place, in which the defeat of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar settled the contest between Egypt and Babylon for the rule of Western Asia in favour of the latter. This year was therefore critical not only for the Jews, since it transferred them from the short-lived suzerainty of Pharaoh to that of Nebuchadnezzar, but for other peoples as well. It was fitting therefore that Jeremiah should at such a time gather up his teaching for one great cumulative appeal ; and we might anticipate that he would, as a prophet set over the nations (i. 10), embrace them also in his survey of the situation created by this decisive turn in the fortunes of his world. Such an anticipation seems to be justified by the present chapter, in which the prophet not only appeals to his long-continued warnings to Judah and predicts the vengeance of God upon it, but includes many peoples in his vision of judgement.

But although the chapter seems to suit the historical situation, it presents numerous critical difficulties, which have excited such suspicion that several scholars have rejected its authenticity altogether, while others eliminate considerable parts of it. The most noteworthy fact about the chapter is that between 13 and 15 the LXX has inserted the oracles on the foreign nations, xlvi–li (xxv. 14 being absent in the LXX). The order in which these chapters are placed differs in the Hebrew and the Greek text, but this is a matter to be considered when these chapters are discussed. But the criticism of the present chapter is connected with that of xlvi–li in two ways. A denial of the Jeremianic origin of the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son

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oracles on the foreign nations tends to draw with it a rejection of xxv. And there is also the question whether these oracles originally stood in immediate connexion with xxv. The former of these questions cannot be profitably discussed at this stage; it belongs rather to the examination of these oracles. It must suffice to say at this point that, while in their present form they contain not a little non-Jeremianic matter, they yet have a genuine nucleus; so that we may approach the present chapter without any prejudice against its authenticity derived from a similar conviction with reference to the oracles on the nations. The second question, however, calls for attention here.

It cannot be denied that this chapter is closely connected with the oracles on the nations. In both cases the same peoples to a large extent recur with considerable, though by no means complete, agreement in order. Further xxv. 13 refers definitely to a book in which a prophecy against Babylon is contained, and such a prophecy we have in l–li. But is the position accorded to these oracles by the LXX after xxv. 13 original? In its present form xxv. 1–13 leads up well to such a series of oracles on the nations, and the reference to 'this book' implies that a collection of oracles was appended. Moreover, the LXX takes the closing words of xxv. 13 as a title to this collection. Probably the Hebrew should also be interpreted in the same way (see note on 12–14). But, if so, we have definite evidence that at one time xlvi–li stood after xxv. 13 not only in the LXX but in the Hebrew text itself. It is nevertheless very improbable that this was its original position. The insertion of these oracles at this point tears xxv in two, separating sections that are really connected. Further, the vision of the goblet of Yahweh's wrath obviously cannot have followed the detailed prophecies on the nations. It leads up to them admirably, but its effect is completely lost if it is placed after them. And it is questionable whether xxv. 1–13 was fitted in its original form to be an introduction to xlvi–li. Schwally (in Stade's *Zeitschrift* for 1888, pp. 177–217) has argued that the original text of 1–13 has undergone a revision in the LXX which has been carried a stage further in the Hebrew. Cornill, on the basis of Schwally's investigation, defends the position that it is only in this doubly revised form that the passage constitutes a good introduction to xlvi–li, and that the second revision was definitely intended to fit it for this purpose. If so, the same conclusion would result that xlvi–li did not originally follow xxv. 1–13. The validity of this last argument is rather a problem in the detailed exegesis of the passage, but the other arguments suffice to render it improbable that the oracles against the foreign nations are correctly placed in the LXX.

of Josiah, king of Judah; the same was the first year of

What then was their original position? In view of the fact that in the Hebrew they once occupied the same position as they now hold in the LXX, it is not an arbitrary suggestion that they were originally connected with xxv, a suggestion which is corroborated by the community of subject-matter. Since, however, they must follow rather than precede the vision of the goblet, we should probably place them at the close of xxv in its original form. But this raises the further question as to the reason for their transposition from the close of xxv to the position they now hold in the LXX and once held in the Hebrew text. Cornill points out that a difficulty was created by the fact that the anticipations expressed in the vision of the goblet of Yahweh's wrath were not really fulfilled after Carchemish, so that it became advisable to detach the oracles on the nations from the vision, a course which was also recommended by the feeling in the later period that such a vision was too great to be treated as a mere description of political catastrophes, and had to be brought into connexion with God's final judgement on the world. In confirmation of this he points to the working over which xxv. 15-38 has experienced. This has been in the direction of heightening the apocalyptic character of the passage, and turning it into a description of the Divine judgement on the nations as the later Jewish eschatology conceived it. But the vision as thus transformed no longer permitted the oracles on the nations with their relevance to the historical situation to stand as its explication, and this provided a further reason for removing them from their original connexion. The date in xlvi. 2, 'in the fourth year of Jehoiakim,' was identical with that in xxv. 1, and occasioned the connexion with xxv. 1-13, from which, with the exception of the title, the oracles on the nations were subsequently removed to the position they now hold in the Hebrew text.

The question as to the authenticity of the chapter still remains. Schwally, who has discussed it in connexion with xlvi-li, has pronounced against its genuineness, and the same view is taken by some other scholars. As against 1-13 even in its earliest form he argues that it cannot be authentic, not only because it contains the most general ideas which would be suitable at any time, but because it does not contain any reflection on the possibility of repentance, which is never missing in Jeremiah's prophecies, not even in those which were uttered near the end of the siege of Jerusalem (p. 184). Cornill replies that this objection overlooks the difference between the situation in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and the close of Zedekiah's reign. In the former case it was an upheaval affecting the whole of Jeremiah's world, for which Judah had no responsibility; in the latter case it was

2 Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; the which Jeremiah

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a dispute between the king of Babylon and his rebellious vassal. Moreover, after Carchemish matters had turned out quite differently from what might have been expected. It was natural to anticipate that Nebuchadnezzar would act with the same ferocity as other conquerors, and we can well understand that Jeremiah believed that at last the foe from the north had come to fulfil his long-deferred prophecies of judgement. But matters took an unexpected turn. Nebuchadnezzar after his victory at Carchemish learnt of his father's death, and had to return to Babylon, after concluding peace with Pharaoh. Thus Jeremiah, remembering the mercy of God in averting this catastrophe, could exhort his countrymen to reform even after Zedekiah had broken his oath of allegiance, whereas in 605 he had no reason to expect anything but the worst, and therefore no longer called them to repentance.

The genuineness of xxv. 15–38 is set aside on grounds similar to those which are urged against xlvi–li, and because Jeremiah is not allowed to be a prophet to the nations. Neither ground is conclusive; for the former see the discussion of those chapters, for the latter what is said in vol. i, pp. 77, 78. Cornill pointed out in his *Introduction to the Old Testament* that the figure of the goblet of Yahweh's wrath is absent from the earlier literature, but after Jeremiah's time becomes prominent. Giesebrecht, who agreed that there was a genuine Jeremianic element in the passage, replied that Cornill had overlooked Nahum iii. 11. Cornill, however, does not admit that this passage, 'Thou also shalt be drunken,' has any reference to the cup of Divine anger, and still maintains that the currency which the metaphor received after Jeremiah's time points to its Jeremianic origin. Giesebrecht in his second edition repeats his objection without any reference to Cornill's reply.

We may accordingly recognize a genuine element in both sections of the chapter. A discussion of the extent to which it has undergone editorial expansion may be left for the notes.

xxv. 1–7. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah reminded his people how, since the thirteenth year of Josiah, he had urged them to abandon their evil way that they might dwell in the land, but they had refused to listen.

8–11. Therefore the northern people will come against their land and the surrounding peoples, and lay the land waste, and the Babylonian supremacy shall last seventy years.

12–14. Then after seventy years the king of Babylon shall be punished, and the land of the Chaldeans shall be desolate, according to all that is written in this book; and many nations shall make them their servants. Thus Yahweh will requite them for their deeds.

the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: [JS] From the 3 thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah,

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15–29. Yahweh bade me take from His hand the cup of His fury, and make the nations drink to whom He sent me. So I took the cup and made the nations drink it, beginning with Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, then Egypt and other kingdoms. He told me to bid them drink and fall, never more to rise. And if they refused I must tell them in His name that they should surely drink, for He would begin His chastisement with His own city, and they should certainly not be spared.

30–33. Yahweh will roar against Judah, and shout as in the treading of the grapes against all the inhabitants of the world. The noise of battle is heard to the end of the earth, for Yahweh is contending with all flesh. Evil goes from nation to nation; the slain of Yahweh shall lie unburied on the ground from end to end of the earth.

34–38. Let the rulers and nobles lament for their inevitable doom. Yahweh lays waste their abodes, He has left His retreat to ravage the land in anger.

xxv. 1. The synchronism in the latter part of the verse may perhaps be original, but it is absent in the LXX and is probably the insertion of an editor. For the date of Nebuchadnezzar cf. xxxii. 1, lii. 12, 2 Kings xxiv. 12, xxv. 8. Nebuchadnezzar was not actually king of Babylon when the decisive battle of Carchemish took place, but on the death of his father Nabopolassar, which occurred shortly afterwards, he succeeded to the throne. The synchronism seems to conflict with xlvi. 2. If the fourth year of Jehoiakim (604 B.C.) was the first of Nebuchadnezzar, we should apparently place the battle of Carchemish in 605, i.e. the third year of Jehoiakim. But it is very questionable if the synchronism in this verse can be trusted.

2. The LXX omits **Jeremiah the prophet,** reading simply **which he spake.** It was apparently added for the sake of clearness by a scribe who took the unnecessary precaution of explaining that Jeremiah, and not one of the three people mentioned after him, was the speaker.

3. The date, **the thirteenth year of Josiah,** is that of Jeremiah's call, as we learn from i. 2. The interval of twenty-three years was made up of nineteen under Josiah, three months under Jehoahaz, and the portion of Jehoiakim's reign which had elapsed at this time. The passage naturally suggests that during this period Jeremiah had exercised a continuous ministry, but this seems hardly to have been the case, for in the latter part of

even unto this day, these three and twenty years, the word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising up early and speaking; [**S**] but ye have not
4 hearkened. And the Lord hath sent unto you all his servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear;
5 [**JS**] saying, Return ye now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord hath given unto you and to your fathers,

---

Josiah's reign he appears to have kept silence. The expression accordingly ought not to be pressed.

the word of the LORD hath come unto me. This is absent in the LXX, and has apparently been introduced from i. 2. On the last clause of the verse, which similarly is absent in the LXX, see the next note.

4. This verse is rejected by several scholars as a gloss. The reference to the activity of the earlier prophets is out of place, where the question concerns the disobedience of Jeremiah's contemporaries to the message he proclaimed, for, as Cornill points out, however vain the work of earlier prophets had been, judgement would have been averted had the people repented at the preaching of Jeremiah. Besides, according to this verse the words which follow in 5, 6 are the words of Yahweh through these prophets, but 7 in its original form shows that they are Jeremiah's words, 'Ye hearkened not unto me,' as indeed we should expect from 3. With this verse we should also omit the closing words of 3, 'but ye have not hearkened,' which are omitted by the LXX, and thus restore the connexion of 5 with 3 in its original form. The verse is derived from vii. 25, 26, xi. 7, 8. The LXX continues 3 without change of subject, 'And I sent unto you all my servants.' The Hebrew 'And Yahweh sent' is clearly a correction; this confirms the view that the verse is a later insertion.

5. saying. According to the present text this must connect with 4^a; and 4^b ('but . . . hear') must be treated as a parenthesis. But when 4 and the last clause of 3 have been struck out (see preceding note), it connects with 'I have spoken unto you,' &c. in 3, and introduces the content of Jeremiah's preaching.

and dwell: expresses the consequence that will follow from obedience to the injunction; true reformation will secure the permanent enjoyment of the land, which in Yahweh's original intention had been allotted to them as their perpetual inheritance.

the LORD hath given. The LXX 'I have given' is probably

from of old and even for evermore : and go not after other 6
gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke
me not to anger with the work of your hands; and I will
do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, 7
saith the Lord; that ye might provoke me to anger with
the work of your hands to your own hurt. [J] Therefore 8

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not to be preferred. It is a correction of the Hebrew, carrying out more consistently the consequences of the insertion of 4, in which Yahweh is represented as the speaker.

6. Cornill treats this as an insertion, on the ground that the close of 5 forms a natural conclusion to the summary of the prophet's message, after which nothing more is to be expected. Duhm retains it, regarding the idea that the pre-exilic people was completely given up to idolatry as characteristic of the later supplementers of the book, to whom he assigns this chapter. It is not necessary, however, to strike it out, even if we hold fast a genuine Jeremianic element in the passage. Cornill's argument for deletion is quite inadequate, and Duhm's bias against the authenticity of passages which denounce idolatry suffers from exaggeration. But the text needs correction. For 'provoke me not,' in which the LXX agrees with the Hebrew, we should read 'provoke not Yahweh,' the abbreviated form of the Divine name being misread as the pronominal suffix. Jeremiah thus continues to speak in his own person. Similarly at the close of the verse we should substitute for 'and I will do you no hurt' the closing words of 7, 'to your own hurt' (see note on that verse).

7. The whole of the verse, with the exception of 'Yet ye have not hearkened unto me,' should be struck out, with the LXX. The insertion of 'saith the Lord' has been occasioned by the mistaken idea that Yahweh was the speaker; the rest of the verse is simply a variant of 6^b, for which, however, we may be grateful since it has preserved the correct text of the closing words 'to your own hurt.' By the aid of the LXX we have thus been enabled to restore a consistent text in which Jeremiah is the sole speaker and Yahweh is throughout referred to in the third person.

unto me: i. e. Jeremiah.

8. Such then has been the tragic history of the prophet's ministry. For three and twenty years he has spoken to his people the message of Yahweh, bidding them repent and turn from their evil doings and idolatrous practices. But they have not listened to his words. What then remains? The day of grace is past, the invitation to return is extended no longer. Yahweh Himself now pronounces the doom which such obstinate disobedi-

thus saith the LORD of hosts: Because ye have not heard
9 my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of
the north, saith the LORD, and *I will send* unto Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and

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ence has so richly merited. The foe from the north, whose coming has been so long foretold, will now come indeed, and inflict the uttermost vengeance on the rebellious nation, in whose downfall the surrounding nations will be involved.

9. all the families: cf. i. 15. The LXX omits 'all' and reads the singular (cf. v. 15, vi. 22); the Hebrew is preferable, since the omission of 'all' in the Greek was probably due to its similarity to the following word, and the plural pronominal suffix ('them') favours a plural antecedent. On the other hand, the LXX is probably right in omitting 'saith the LORD,' which is unnecessary in an utterance of Yahweh.

and I will send . . . my servant. This is rightly omitted by the LXX. The Hebrew is very awkward, and the subordinate position assigned to Nebuchadnezzar is hardly what we should expect.

my servant: so called as the instrument of Yahweh's vengeance, not of course as a worshipper of Yahweh. It is noteworthy that the LXX omits the title when applied to Nebuchadnezzar elsewhere in the book (xxvii. 6, xliii. 10), probably because the translator objected to the designation of an idolater by so honourable a title.

and against all these nations round about. Schwally, Bleeker, and Duhm strike out the whole clause. But while the prophet is naturally thinking of Judah in the first instance, the political situation drew the surrounding peoples with it. Jeremiah, it is true, seems, if this clause is genuine, to trace the overthrow of these nations to the guilt of Judah. But this is not unexampled: the storm which threatened to overwhelm Jonah, who represents Israel, and the heathen sailors in a common destruction, was due solely to Jonah's sin; and a similar attitude is observable elsewhere. Jeremiah, like other prophets, was preoccupied with the sin of his own people and its punishment; apparently he felt no problem to be raised by the overthrow of other peoples which he expected to accompany it. We should, however, follow the LXX in omitting 'these,' and read simply 'the nations round about,' especially as the only nations hitherto mentioned are 'the families of the north,' who of course are not intended.

I will [a] utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. More- 10

[a] Heb. *devote.*

I will utterly destroy them. The Hebrew means 'I will put them under the ban,' the ban being a sacred vow by which its object was devoted to utter destruction. Thus Achan brought disaster on Israel by 'a trespass in the devoted thing,' having appropriated gold, silver, and raiment from the spoil of Jericho (Joshua vii); while Saul is represented as rejected by God because he had not carried out the ban upon Amalek, but had spared Agag and the choicest of the spoil (1 Sam. xv). The expression is often used with reference to the extermination of Canaanites in Deuteronomy and Joshua. It is questionable, however, whether the text is correct. The LXX reads 'I will make them desolate,' which involves the change of a single consonant. It is not quite easy to choose between them, since, as Cornill points out, both verbs occur elsewhere in the book only in the non-Jeremianic section l, li. He prefers the LXX, on the ground that the same root frequently occurs in Jeremiah, while the root of the alternative word does not occur.

desolations. The LXX reads 'reproach': cf. xxiii. 40, xxiv. 9. In xxix. 18 the same three nouns, 'an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach,' are combined. It is on the whole probable that we should read 'reproach' here. It is true that we might suspect assimilation to xxix. 18; but in view of the similarity of the two words it is unlikely that the change is to be accounted for in this way, and it is much more likely that 'reproach' was changed into 'desolations' under the influence of the verb 'I will make them desolate' which occurs just before (see preceding note).

10. For the former part of the verse cf. vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxxiii. 11. But here we have a significant addition. For the voice of mirth and gladness, or of the bridegroom and the bride, might be hushed when the land was still thronged with inhabitants. The absence of joyful song and the sound of merriment would mean that a great sorrow was brooding over the people when feasting and marriage could not fitly be celebrated. But in times of the deepest dejection the urgent physical needs must be satisfied, the hand-mill must grind the daily supply of corn, the lamp must be lit as the darkness closes in. The sound of the grinding, which can be heard at a distance in the early morning, is the invariable sign of human life in the East, and even in the poorest home the lamp is indispensable. The deathly stillness when the harsh sound of the mill no longer falls on the ear, the darkness in which no light glimmers from the cottage, are infallible tokens that the land has been

over I will [a] take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the
11 light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall

[a] Heb. *cause to perish from them.*

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stripped of its inhabitants. It is with the instinct of genius that the poet has seized on the absence of these signs to indicate the fate which is to overtake Judah and the surrounding peoples. In the Revelation of John the same signs are borrowed to describe the desolation of Babylon, i.e. Rome (xviii. 22, 23).

millstones. The hand-mill consisted of two stones; the 'nether millstone' was stationary, the upper revolved upon it, being often turned by two women (Matt. xxiv. 41, Luke xvii. 35), one of whom fed the mill with her right hand through the hole in the upper stone. Deut. xxiv. 6 forbids the mill or the upper millstone to be taken in pledge, 'for he taketh a man's life to pledge,' so indispensable was it to the provision of the daily bread. The LXX reads 'scent of myrrh.' The word rendered 'millstones' is the dual of a word very similar to that for 'scent,' and the Greek words for 'myrrh' and 'mill' are also very similar. The reading has no claim to be considered as original, but it apparently arose from both the causes mentioned, not simply from the latter.

candle: rather **lamp,** as the R.V. usually renders.

11. and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. This is a difficult passage. The LXX reads simply 'And they shall serve among the nations seventy years.' It is probable that it correctly represents the original text in its omission of 'these' and 'the king of Babylon,' also that a retranslation of its text gives us the original Hebrew. It is questionable, however, whether the Greek translator rightly understood it. The Hebrew verb is used with the preposition rendered 'among' in the sense 'to use as subjects' (literally 'to serve with:' Duhm compares the expression 'to work with cattle,' or 'work by means of'). The phrase occurs in 14, where it is rendered 'shall serve themselves of:' cf. xxvii. 7, xxx. 8, Ezek. xxxiv. 27, in xxii. 13 to use the service of. If this sense is to be maintained here, we must take the meaning to be that the foe out of the north will enslave the nations and keep them in bondage for seventy years. Against this it may be urged that the natural subject of the verb is not 'the families of the north,' though with this translation they alone are suitable. Cornill argues forcibly that the LXX gives the true meaning, and that we need not combine the verb and preposition in the sense serve the king of Babylon seventy years. [S] And it 12

'to use as slaves,' but take the verb as used absolutely (as e.g. in ii. 20, 'I will not serve'), and the preposition as used in its local sense 'among.' We thus learn what becomes of the inhabitants who have been torn from their homes: they are doomed to slavery among the nations. The Hebrew text may have arisen through the desire to provide the verb with a subject, other passages perhaps co-operating (e.g. xxvii. 7), and 'the king of Babylon' was inserted to provide the verb with an object.

The prediction that the captivity would last seventy years is suspected as non-Jeremianic by many scholars, including some who regard the chapter as a whole as Jeremiah's, and admit his authorship of the similar prediction in xxix. 10. It is remarkable that the latter passage was written several years later, in the reign of Zedekiah, and that the same number is mentioned there as here. But we need not be disturbed by this discrepancy, unless we insist that the number was meant to be taken literally. More probably we must regard it as a round number, just as the same period is described in xxvii. 7 as embracing the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar 'and his son, and his son's son.' Duhm considers that the author took it from Zech. i. 12, 'how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?' (cf. vii. 5). But it is more likely that Zechariah's reference to the seventy years was occasioned by his acquaintance with Jeremiah's prophecy. The angel of Yahweh enforces his plea by the reminder that the seventy years which had been laid down in prophecy as the period of Jerusalem's humiliation had now expired. In any case the actual duration of the captivity was less than seventy years, if we assume that the first return of Jews took place in 536 B.C. Nor did the Babylonian supremacy last quite seventy years. Had the representation of the subjection to Babylon as lasting seventy years originated in the post-exilic period, we should have expected a closer agreement with history. At the same time it is not unlikely that the clause did not originally belong to this context, if the reconstruction of the original close of the oracle suggested in the next note is correct.

12-14. This passage is regarded by many scholars as a later insertion, and was so treated even by Graf (along with 11^b) and by Hitzig (except for 14^b), who had been preceded by not a few critics, while others rejected only 13. Orelli still substantially defends their authenticity, apart from 13^b. A prophecy of Babylon's overthrow is not in place here. It is true that it does not link on badly to 11^b, which, while it predicts a long captivity, suggests that a turn of fortune, such as the overthrow of Babylon, is to come at the end of seventy years. But it disastrously disturbs shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished,

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the connexion with 15 ff., which, introduced as it is by 'For,' must follow immediately on a prophecy of the overthrow of Judah and the surrounding peoples. Moreover, 13 in its present form is exposed to additional objections. It is quite unexampled for the prophet in the course of his prophecy to refer to himself in the third person, and the language implies that a book of prophecies containing the oracle on Babylon, presumably l–li. 58, lay before the writer. But this oracle on Babylon is not from the pen of Jeremiah, and even li. 59 ff. contains a narrative from the time of Zedekiah, whereas our chapter belongs to the reign of Jehoiakim. As a whole then 12–14 must be regarded as a later insertion. But the question must still be raised whether the whole passage needs to be struck out. While some scholars treat 13 as itself an insertion within an insertion, Schwally and Cornill have argued that part of it belongs to the original structure, to which it is also referred by Rothstein. It is obvious that the closing words, with their reference to Jeremiah in the third person, cannot be part of the prophecy. But the LXX is probably correct in taking them as the title of the prophecies against the foreign nations (xlvi–li), which once stood here in the Hebrew text as they do now in the LXX. If we take out the words 'What Jeremiah prophesied concerning the nations' (omitting 'all,' with the LXX), the rest of the verse might belong to Jeremiah's prophecy if we supposed the original reference in 'that land' to have been to Judah rather than to Babylon. In this case the 'book' will presumably be the book in which Jeremiah had collected his prophecies during the three and twenty years of his ministry, i. e. the roll written at his dictation by Baruch and burnt by Jehoiakim. We may thus assume that in its original form this section of the chapter closed with 11^{a}, 13^{ab}: 'And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and I will bring upon this land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book.' We have thus a conclusion which better corresponds to the beginning, in which Jeremiah speaks of the words he has for so long been proclaiming to his people. And the vision of the wine-cup links well to the passage in this restored form.

12. The verse should run in the briefer form presupposed by the LXX, 'And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish (Heb. visit) that nation; and I will make it desolate for ever.' The verse is based on xxix. 10, where Yahweh promises to 'visit' His people, i.e. in mercy. The author of this verse keeps the same word, but uses it in the sense to 'punish.' The expression 'desolate for ever' is literally 'perpetual desolations;' it comes apparently from the oracle on

that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation,
saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the
Chaldeans; and I will make it [a] desolate for ever. [J] And 13
I will bring upon that land all my words which I have
pronounced against it, even all that is written in this
book, [**R**] which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the
nations. [**S**] For many nations and great kings [b] shall serve 14
themselves of them, even of them: and I will recompense
them according to their deeds, and according to
the work of their hands.

[J] For thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, unto me: 15

[a] Heb. *everlasting desolations.*

[b] Or, *have served themselves* or, *made bondmen*

Babylon, li. 26, 62: cf. xlix. 33, Ezek. xxxv. 9 (from which it may have been originally derived).

13. See note on 12–14.

14. Since the closing words of 13 constitute in the LXX a title to xlvi–li, which immediately follows, there is no place for 14 and it is omitted. But inasmuch as the oracles against the foreign nations once stood in the same position in the Hebrew text, we may infer that 14 and 12, which is inseparably connected with it, were introduced into the Hebrew text after xlvi–li had been removed to the end of the book. 14^a is derived from xxvii. 7^b. Hitzig took 14^b to be the continuation of 11^a, but Graf pointed out in reply that the expressions in it seemed to be borrowed from the oracle on Babylon, l. 29, li. 24: cf. l. 15, li. 6, 56.

serve themselves of them. This expression occurs in xxii. 13, where it is rendered 'to use the service of;' it means here to employ them as slaves: so xxvii. 11, xxx. 8. See note on 11.

15. We now come to the striking vision of the wine-cup of Yahweh's fury, which is linked closely to the preceding section by 'For' (naturally omitted by the LXX). Duhm recognizes that the conception itself is worthy of a Jeremiah, and that the passage itself would be if the author's gift of expression had been on a level with the conception. This objection may perhaps be met by the elimination of insertions; Duhm's further objection that the conception itself cannot be Jeremiah's, since he was no prophet to the nations, has been sufficiently dealt with already (see vol. i, pp. 77, 78). The giving of the draught to the nations can be thought of only as a transaction in the mind of the prophet, since an actual visit to the nations is out of the question, and like the

Take the cup of the wine of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.
16 And they shall drink, and reel to and fro, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.
17 Then took I the cup at the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me:
18 [JS] *towit*, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings

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view that he gave the wine to their assembled ambassadors, could occur only to a degraded literalism. It is not, however, a mere allegory, but a psychic experience, in which Jeremiah really seems to himself to be forcing the goblet on the nations which he enumerates. It thus falls into the same category as similar instances in Ezekiel.

the wine of this fury. The second noun is in apposition to the first, explaining what 'the wine' really is. The LXX reads 'of this unmixed wine' (cf. Ps. lxxv. 8), and Duhm and Erbt prefer this. Cornill thinks no explanation was needed, and that one of the words should be struck out. Since no one would have thought of inserting 'wine' if the original text had been 'cup of fury,' he reads 'take this cup of wine.' Rothstein goes a step further, and reads simply 'take this cup,' impoverishing the description for the prosaic scruple that the cup does not actually contain wine. He compares Isa. li. 21, 'drunken, but not with wine.'

16. The effects caused by the drinking of this mystic wine are now described. The nations reel under the shock of disaster, and are helpless in perplexity and dismay. At the close of the verse the figure is spoiled by the intrusion of the reality, if the sword intended is that of the foe; and even if it be 'the sword of the Lord,' the unity of the description is disturbed by this alien element. It should therefore be omitted. It has been inserted probably from 27.

18-26. The following list can hardly in its present form be attributed to Jeremiah. An enumeration of the peoples to which the cup was given is quite in place, but the list has been swollen by later additions. In 20 the LXX omits 'and all the kings of the land of Uz;' in 24 either 'and all the kings of Arabia' or 'and all the kings of the mingled people;' in 25 'and all the kings of Zimri.' In each case the LXX is probably correct. Since all are characterized by the phrase 'and all the kings of,' Giesebrecht, with the concurrence of Cornill, uses this phrase as a criterion of additions. The original catalogue he takes to have included Judah, Egypt, Philistia, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tema, Buz, and

thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desola-
tion, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; as it is
this day; Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his 19
princes, and all his people; and all the mingled people, 20
and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of
the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Gaza, and

'those that have the corners *of their hair* polled.' In several cases the phrase 'all the kings of' has no very intelligible meaning, for it is prefixed to cities or countries which had only one king. Besides we have 'all the kings of the Philistines' mentioned, and then in addition to them 'Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod,' i.e. Philistia is enumerated twice.

18. The closing words, 'as it is this day,' must be an addition, made after the State had been overthrown and Jerusalem laid in ruins. It is possible that they were inserted by Jeremiah himself or Baruch, but hardly probable, for they are not in the LXX. Perhaps all after 'Judah' is an insertion; 'the kings thereof' is suspicious. Cornill, who takes this view, thinks that originally Pharaoh headed the list. This would correspond to the historical fact that he was the protagonist in the conflict with Babylon, and it was his defeat at Carchemish which formed the decisive turning-point in the history of the period. Judah had only a subordinate part to play, her fate depended on that of Egypt. If this were the original order, the placing of Judah at the head of the list would be due to a scribe who did not tolerate that his country should be anything but first—even in punishment.

19. If the view that 'all the kings of' is in each case a sign of later insertion is correct, Egypt is the only one of the heathen nations whose king is mentioned. But that is quite natural in view of the tremendous significance attaching to his overthrow (see preceding note). The princes are perhaps the petty kings of Egypt who regarded the Pharaoh as their suzerain.

20. and all the mingled people. This clause (deleted by Giesebrecht and by Cheyne, *Enc. Bib.* 3099) should go with the preceding verse: it includes the foreigners who had settled in Egypt, who while retaining their own nationality were subject to Egyptian rule.

and all the kings of the land of Uz. This clause is omitted in the LXX, and its position in the enumeration is surprising. It is apparently an insertion. On the situation of Uz see the editor's note on Job i. 1, also on 23 in the present chapter. It was closely connected with Edom.

and all the kings of the land of the Philistines. The LXX

21 Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; Edom, and Moab, and
22 the children of Ammon; and all the kings of Tyre, and
all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the [a]isle which is be-
23 yond the sea; Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all that have

[a] †Or, *coastland*

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omits 'the land of,' but the whole clause is an insertion, since it duplicates in a summary way what follows. Of the five cities of the Philistines Gath is not mentioned. Amos (i. 6-8) similarly omits it, and the same is true of Zeph. ii. 4, Zech. ix. 5, 6.

the remnant of Ashdod. This Philistine city had, we learn from Herodotus (ii. 157), been captured and destroyed by Psammetichus (king of Egypt 666–610 B. C.) about a quarter of a century previously, after a siege of twenty-nine years. The 'remnant' means the few miserable survivors. 'We can imagine that he would not be disposed to lenient dealings with the town upon its capture' (Cheyne, in the *Pulpit Commentary*). The town was in existence again in the age of Nehemiah, who complacently plumes himself on the ferocity with which he treated his countrymen who had married women of Ashdod, and whose 'children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language' (Neh. xiii. 23 ff.). The city was captured in the Maccabean period by Judas Maccabaeus (1 Macc. v. 68), and again by Jonathan (1 Macc. x. 84), but it is not reasonable to suppose that the reference is to either of these events.

22. This verse is struck out by Giesebrecht and Cornill on the ground already mentioned, of the formula 'all the kings of.' The omission of Phoenicia may seem surprising, but it is absent from the list in ix. 25, and from xlvi–li. The 'coastland which is beyond the sea' seems, on account of its association with Tyre and Zidon, to be the Phoenician colonies in the Mediterranean Sea and on its coasts. The LXX reads simply 'the kings beyond the sea.'

23. Dedan and Tema were North-Arabian tribes, which are mentioned as neighbours in Isa. xxi. 13, 14. The latter, which is also referred to in Job vi. 19, where it is coupled with Sheba, is according to Gen. xxv. 15 an Ishmaelite clan. Its home was about 250 miles to the south-east of Edom, and is to be identified with Teima. Dedan (xlix. 8, where it is connected with Edom: cf. Ezek. xxv. 13) is described in Gen. x. 7 along with Sheba, with which it is elsewhere associated (Ezek. xxxviii. 13), as a Hamitic people of Cushite stock. It is referred to as a trading people in Ezek. xxvii. 15, 20. Buz, according to Gen. xxii. 21, is represented as a son of Nahor and brother of Uz, and Gen. x. 23 makes Uz a son of Aram. These data point to Naharina as the home of

the corners *of their hair* polled; [S] and all the kings of 24
Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that
dwell in the wilderness; and all the kings of Zimri, and all 25

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both. But other data connect Uz with Edom (especially Gen. xxxvi. 28, Lam. iv. 21, and the fact that Job's friend Eliphaz was a Temanite), and the present verse strongly favours a similar situation for Buz, to which Elihu belonged (Job xxxii. 2). On the whole question see the note on Job i. 1. For the 'corner-clipped' people see on ix. 26.

24. In the unpointed Hebrew text 'and all the kings of Arabia' is identical with 'and all the kings of the mingled people,' so that of the two clauses one should be struck out as due to mistaken repetition. The LXX read only one, taking it in the sense of the latter. 'The mingled people' is a term difficult to interpret in this connexion; on the analogy of 20 it should mean people of foreign stock who lived among the tribes just mentioned. But we should adopt the other clause, reading the verse 'And all the kings of Arāb that dwell in the wilderness.' The rendering 'Arabia' is unfortunate, since all that is covered by the term here is one or more tribes in North Arabia. It never in the O.T. means Arabia in our sense of the term. We may perhaps illustrate this passage from Isa. xxi. 13, but it is dubious whether the word there is a proper name. The whole verse is treated as an insertion by Cornill; Giesebrecht retains 'and the Arabs who dwell in the wilderness.'

25, 26. The rest of the description is struck out by Giesebrecht and Cornill, not merely on account of the formula 'and all the kings of,' but to some extent on the LXX evidence, and largely on the ground of contents. The wider and wider sweep of the enumeration stamps the verses as coloured by the later eschatology.

and all the kings of Zimri. This is absent in the LXX. Zimri is quite unknown; it has commonly been identified with Zimran, the son of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. xxv. 2). But this is very dubious, nor do the cuneiform inscriptions give us any trustworthy information. Curiously it is marked as east of the Tigris on the map of Syria, Assyria, and Babylonia in the *Enc. Bib.*, and on the map of Mesopotamia. Duhm makes the interesting suggestion that the word may be a cypher for a name at which the writer only dared to hint, such as 'Romans,' which has the same numerical value. This, however, would imply a very late date for the insertion, and although we have a cypher in the next verse, it is not natural to look for one here. If the text is correct, we must resign ourselves to ignorance. Gomer (Ezek. xxxviii. 6) would be an easy emendation, but it is doubtful whether it would be suitable here, in spite of the eschatological hue of the passage.

26 the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes; and all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of [a] Sheshach shall drink

[a] According to ancient tradition, a cypher for *Babel*. See ch. li. 41.

Since this note was written the editor has seen that Rost and Peiser had previously suggested the same emendation in the form 'Gomeri' or 'Gimirri.'

Elam: see on xlix. 34. It lay beyond the Tigris, east of Babylonia, south of Assyria and Media, and reaching to the Persian Gulf on the south. Its combination with Media here is interesting in the light of Isa. xxi. 2, which was probably written shortly before the capture of Babylon by Cyrus. Cf. also Isa. xxii. 6.

all the kings of the north. This is not a very suitable addition, since the 'families of the north' are those who are the agents of Divine vengeance, but it is accounted for by the eschatological interest, which is still more evident in the following clause in which a universal judgement is announced, whereas a selection of nations is implied in the prophet's commission: 'the nations to whom I send thee' (15, cf. 17).

one with another. The words may be taken with 'far and near' to mean whether they are near to or far from one another, or they may mean one after another.

of the world. The LXX omits this. It is not only unnecessary but ungrammatical in the Hebrew.

and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. Sheshach is a secret mode of writing Babel: cf. li. 41. The cypher employed here and in li. 1, 41 is known as *Atbash*, since the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet was interchanged with the first, the last but one with the second, the last but two with the third, and so on. When thus interpreted Sheshach is read Babel. It is employed here either because at the time this verse was inserted it was dangerous to speak of the fall of Babylon in plain language, or because the writer had the apocalyptic fondness for mysterious designations. In view of the freedom with which Babylon is mentioned in prophecies of its downfall towards the close of the exile, and especially of the use of Babel in the same breath with Sheshach in li. 41, the former motive seems not to have operated. We may accordingly assume that it was chosen under the latter impulse, but also because the name contained in itself a congenial suggestion. To the Hebrew ear the name would suggest 'humiliation.' The clause cannot well have belonged to Jeremiah's original prophecy, though it may be granted that some of the objections which may be urged against 12, 14 are not applicable here, and it

after them. And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith 27
the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink ye, and be
drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because
of the sword which I will send among you. And it shall 28
be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink,
then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of

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is by no means incredible that Jeremiah, who anticipated a restoration for his people after seventy years, should have appended a prophecy of Babylon's overthrow. It is not likely, however, that he would have done so at the time when the prophecy was first written, or on its republication after the destruction of the roll. It is, moreover, probable that the clause was not written by Jeremiah at all. The objection that after the enumeration of the lands which have to drink the cup has been closed by the general statements in the earlier part of the verse, it is unfitting that a definite kingdom should be mentioned, is of little moment. For it lies in the nature of the case that if Babylon is the instrument of this universal judgement, the king of Babylon must be the last to drink; and it is the very opposite of unfitting that he should be definitely mentioned at the close, corresponding to Pharaoh at the beginning of the list. And this argument has no weight if we have already denied to Jeremiah the rest of the verse. All we could infer from it, if it were sound, would be that the last clause of 26 was not from the same hand as the rest of the verse; but unless we claim the earlier part of the verse for Jeremiah, it has no bearing on the Jeremianic origin of its conclusion. Nevertheless this is rendered improbable by its absence from the LXX, by the connexion of the passage with l-li, and by the use of a cypher which smacks of apocalyptic rather than prophecy, and is unexampled in Jeremiah's genuine writings. How old the Atbash cypher is we do not know.

27-29. It is surprising, after we have learnt in 17 that the prophet had made all the nations drink to whom Yahweh had sent him, to find the drinking regarded as something still lying in the future, which the nations may try to resist. Moreover from 17 onwards Jeremiah is the speaker, while here it is Yahweh, though no indication of the change is given. It would largely meet these difficulties if we could transpose these verses and bring them into connexion with 15, 16. And the points of contact between 16 and 27 may seem to favour this. We must not press the 'unaesthetic description' in 27 against Jeremianic authorship, in view of such passages as Isa. xxviii. 8, Hos. vii. 5, to say nothing of 2 Pet. ii. 3, and the caution we need constantly to bear in mind that we must not apply our canons of taste to ancient authors. But 28, 29 can

29 hosts: Ye shall surely drink. For, lo, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the
30 earth, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore prophesy thou

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hardly be from the pen of Jeremiah. The thought that the nations might refuse to drink is in itself strange, in view of the visionary character of the experience. We have at the close of 29 the same universal scope of the judgement which we have met with in 26. But even more incompatible with Jeremiah's attitude is the point of view from which 29 is written. Is it credible that the prophet, who proclaims with such tremendous energy the inexcusable character of Judah's sin, and represents it as unparalleled among the heathen (ii. 10, 11), should have said that since Judah was punished, the nations should not escape? The language suggests, if it does not imply, a favouritism towards Israel which the pre-exilic prophets from Amos onwards earnestly oppose. It is written rather from the standpoint represented by the Second Isaiah, from which Judah was regarded as relatively innocent in contrast with the heathen, though the great prophet of the exile drew a different inference. He says that the sufferings of the comparatively innocent Israel are vicariously borne to atone for the guilt of the heathen. The author of 28, 29 regards it as intolerable that Judah should suffer alone; if Judah is punished, *a fortiori* the rest of the world. In xlix. 12 the thought recurs in a form still more extreme. But 28, 29 cannot stand alone, they need 27. Verses 27–29, however, cannot very well be thrust in before 17 ff., and the last clause of 27 is as inconsistent with Jeremiah's authorship in this verse as in 16. Accordingly it is best to regard 27-29 as a later insertion unskilfully made at an inappropriate point.

29. which is called by my name: see vii. 10.

30–38. A more poetical style is here resumed, but grave doubts may be urged against Jeremiah's authorship of the passage. It is very imitative in character, and the eschatological tendency is very pronounced.

30. The opening of the poem seems to have been imitated from Amos i. 2, 'Yahweh shall roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem' (cf. Joel iii. 16). Amos continues, 'and the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.' This may have suggested the word rendered 'fold' (marg. 'pasture') and the mention of the 'shepherds' later in the passage. Here, however, Yahweh utters His lion-like roar 'from on high,' 'from His holy habitation,' i. e. from His heavenly temple. He against them all these words, and say unto them, The LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar against his [a] fold; he shall give a shout, as they that tread *the grapes*, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise 31 shall come even to the end of the earth; for the LORD hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all flesh; as for the wicked, he will give them to the sword, saith the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go 32

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[a] Or, *pasture*

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thunders against His pasture or homestead, i. e. the land of Judah, where His flock is feeding. In the latter part of the verse the figure changes and the judgement embraces all the earth. Instead of the lion roaring against the homestead, we have the vintage shout of the grape treaders. The word rendered 'shout' which bears this particular application is used similarly in the oracle on Moab, Isa. xvi. 10, and in its expansion Jer. xlviii. 33. Here it is a vintage shout, but Yahweh is treading human grapes, and the wine is the blood of men, as in Lam. i. 15 and the powerful but terrible description of the judgement on Edom in Isa. lxiii. 1-6. See further on xlviii. 33. According to the present text, it is all the inhabitants of the earth that are in Yahweh's winepress, but Duhm may be right in regarding this clause, which has no parallel line, as an insertion. In any case the universal scope of the judgement is attested by what follows.

31. Cf. Isa. iii. 13, 14. The noise is apparently the crash of battle which resounds to the ends of the earth. The last clause does not mean that the wicked among the heathen are to be given to the sword, for the judgement falls on the heathen as such. Judah is involved in the catastrophe, but possibly the writer may intend to suggest that righteous Jews will not be slain. For 'plead' we should substitute 'contend' (see ii. 9).

32. The latter part of the verse is taken from vi. 22, but 'tempest' is substituted for 'nation:' cf. xxiii. 19, xxx. 23. Duhm thinks the meaning is that at the instigation of Yahweh one people falls on another, till all are destroyed. But perhaps the words mean no more than that the storm of judgement strikes one nation after another. The instrument of judgement is a foe from the uttermost parts of the earth, a phrase which probably bears a different sense here than in vi. 22, the author's geographical horizon being more remote. He has no definite people in his mind,

forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be
33 raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth. And the
slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the
earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall
not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they
34 shall be dung upon the face of the ground. Howl, ye
shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves *in ashes*, ye
principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter are
fully come, [a] and I will break you in pieces, and ye shall
35 fall like a pleasant vessel. And [b] the shepherds shall

[a] Or, *and I will disperse you* Many ancient versions read, *and your dispersions.* [b] Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escape from &c.*

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but it was natural to suppose that the unknown races which dwelt on the earth's rim might play the part the Scythians were expected in earlier periods to play.

33. In 'that day,' the apocalyptic Day of the Lord, 'the slain of Yahweh' (Isa. lxvi. 16) will lie strewn on the ground, right across the world; none will survive to utter the lamentation, to perform the last offices.

34. The 'shepherds' are, as often elsewhere, the rulers; the 'principal of the flock' are their chief subjects.

wallow yourselves: cf. vi. 26.

and I will break you in pieces. The form in the text is anomalous, and the versions give no satisfactory sense. Probably 'to break in pieces' is the sense intended rather than 'to scatter,' which is unsuitable to the context, while the alternative sense does suit the reference to the pleasant vessel. Since the latter, however, is due to a textual corruption (see next note), we should probably strike out the word, which is not read by the LXX.

a pleasant vessel. The shattering of a costly vessel is in itself a very appropriate metaphor, but it can hardly be correct here, since it introduces an incongruous element, and this applies also to Graetz's emendation 'a vessel of clay' (cf. xviii, xiii. 13, 14). The passage throughout employs the metaphor of a flock and its shepherds, and the LXX reads 'rams' instead of 'vessel.' Two easy emendations of the Hebrew would be possible on this basis, but it would be better to read with Duhm 'rams of slaughter.' He compares 'flock of slaughter,' Zech. xi. 4, 7, all the more that he thinks this portion of Zechariah served the author as a model in other respects.

35. Based on Amos ii. 14.

have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to
escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and the 36
howling of the principal of the flock! for the LORD
layeth waste their pasture. And the peaceable folds are 37
brought to silence because of the fierce anger of the
LORD. He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for 38
their land is become an astonishment because of [a] the
fierceness of the oppressing *sword*, and because of his
fierce anger.

[B] In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son **26**

[a] †Or, according to some ancient authorities, *the oppressing sword* See ch. xlvi. 16.

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36. Cf. Zech. xi. 3.

38. The text seems to mean either that Yahweh has been forced by the devastation of Judah to abandon His land, just as the lion is forced by the destruction of his lair, or that He has left His 'holy habitation' to lay waste the earth, as a lion leaves his lair to attack the flock. But the thought is in either case very imperfectly expressed, and we should, with most recent commentators, strike out the particle of comparison and read 'the lion leaves his covert' or 'lions leave their covert,' i.e. the lions are forced out of their lairs by the destruction of the jungle: cf. Zech. xi. 3.

the fierceness of the oppressing sword. The Hebrew is incorrect. The margin gives the true reading, which is that of the LXX and Targum and some Hebrew MSS., is attested by xlvi. 16, l. 16, and involves a very slight change in the Hebrew.

and because of his fierce anger. This clause is omitted in the LXX, but is required by the parallelism. The pronoun has, it is true, no antecedent; perhaps none was felt to be needed; but the defect is readily remedied if we read 'the fierce anger of Yahweh,' as in 37, which with the abbreviated form of the Divine name would be very like the present text.

XXVI. JEREMIAH, AT GRAVE RISK OF HIS LIFE, THREATENS THAT THE TEMPLE WILL BE DESTROYED.

With this chapter we begin a series of extracts from the biography of Jeremiah, which we may with confidence assign to Baruch, and which with some interruptions extend to xlv. This is not to say that the biography has not been used for earlier sections of the book, but from this point it is the leading source.

of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from the LORD,

The narrative in the present chapter refers, as most critics recognize, to the same occasion as that on which the address recorded in vii was delivered. Both contain the emphatic declaration that unless the people amend their ways Yahweh will make the Temple like Shiloh, and both represent the address as delivered to all Judah at the Temple itself. While vii reproduces the address itself, xxvi is mainly occupied with the circumstances in which it was delivered, especially its sequel. It is of great importance for the light it throws on the prophet's fidelity to his mission, which led him to face the extreme consequences, and on the attitude to the temple which characterized the official and popular religion of the time. The chronological note at the beginning is valuable, in view of the weighty character of the address. There is no occasion to doubt its accuracy, according to which we should date the event in 608 B.C. or thereabouts. Duhm thinks of Jehoiakim's coronation. At that time the crisis was over. Josiah, it is true, was dead, Jehoahaz dethroned, the suzerainty of Egypt established. Yet the State remained, the dynasty of David held the throne, the people were still suffered to dwell in their own country and their own homes. The Temple stood, they could still look at it as a fetish guaranteeing their security (vii. 4), and declare that they were delivered (vii. 10). A somewhat later date, however, would also fit these conditions. The coronation day would not be the time most appropriate for such an address, and had it been delivered then, we might have expected Baruch to mention it explicitly.

xxvi. 1–6. Yahweh bids the prophet stand in the Temple court and proclaim to Judah His word, since repentance may avert the punishment He purposes to inflict. He is to tell them that unless they hearken to His word, He will make the Temple like Shiloh, and Jerusalem a curse to all nations.

7–9. When Jeremiah had delivered his message, the priests and prophets threatened him with death for proclaiming the destruction of the Temple and city.

10–15. The priests and prophets accuse Jeremiah to the princes and people as worthy of death for prophesying against Jerusalem. Jeremiah replies that Yahweh has bidden him speak all these words. He exhorts them to amend their life, in which case Yahweh will repent of the evil He has spoken. As for himself, they must act as they think well; only if they kill him they will bring innocent blood on themselves and the city, since all he has spoken he has been commanded by Yahweh to speak.

16–19. The princes and the people decide that Jeremiah is not worthy of death, since he has spoken in Yahweh's name. Some

saying, Thus saith the LORD: Stand in the court of the 2
LORD's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah,
which come to worship in the LORD's house, all the words
that I command thee to speak unto them; keep not back
a word. It may be they will hearken, and turn every 3

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of the elders remind the people that Micah had foretold the destruction of the city and Temple. But Hezekiah, so far from putting him to death, besought Yahweh's mercy and the punishment was averted.

20–24. Uriah similarly prophesied against Jerusalem and Judah. Jehoiakim sought to kill him, but he escaped into Egypt. Thereupon Jehoiakim sent to Egypt to fetch him, and when he was brought back killed him. Ahikam, however, protected Jeremiah, so that he was not put to death.

1. It is characteristic of Baruch to insert dates at the beginning of his narratives, so that we are far better informed with reference to the time at which many of the events occurred than with reference to the dates at which several of the discourses were uttered.

came this word. The Syriac adds 'to Jeremiah.' The LXX agrees with the Hebrew in omitting it, and its insertion by the Syriac is easy to account for, since the passage is abrupt without it; but this very abruptness is itself a reason for regarding the words as original, and their omission as due to accident.

2. the court of the LORD'S house: cf. xix. 14.

unto all the cities of Judah. We should probably strike out 'the cities of,' with the LXX; it seems to be a reminiscence of xi. 6. In vii. 2 we have 'Hear the word of Yahweh, all Judah.' The occasion was apparently a festival when the people from the country districts and other towns of Judah came up to Jerusalem and assembled at the Temple. To the people, thus trusting, in spite of their recent disasters, in the Temple as the guarantee of Yahweh's presence and protection, the prophet is sent with his unwelcome message.

keep not back a word. As the sequel showed, the message was one which the prophet could deliver only at the risk of his life. He was therefore exposed to the temptation of modifying or omitting the sterner portions of it. Accordingly in this instance the warning is repeated, which he had received as a general instruction at the outset of his ministry, 'speak unto them all that I command thee' (i. 17). For the expression here (literally as A.V. 'diminish not a word') cf. Deut. iv. 2, xii. 32.

3. turn every man from his evil way. Observe the individualizing form of the expression.

man from his evil way ; that I may repent me of the evil,
which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of
4 their doings. And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith
the LORD : If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in
5 my law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the
words of my servants the prophets, whom I send unto
you, even rising up early and sending them, but ye have
6 not hearkened ; then will I make this house like Shiloh,

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that I may repent me. Even now repentance and reform may avert the meditated judgement. For the principle cf. xviii. 8, and its most beautiful expression in the Book of Jonah. Ezekiel applies it to the individual (Ezek. xviii. 21–23, 27, 28, xxxiii. 11–20). The anthropomorphic assertion of God's repentance is not uncommon in the Old Testament from Gen. vi. 6 onwards.

4–6. Duhm says that Baruch could not have written a single word of these verses. The reason seems to be that Jeremiah could not have made the deliverance of the people dependent on obedience to the Law, in view of what he says in viii. 8, 9, and Baruch also must have known that the audience, and the priests and prophets in particular, were the most zealous adherents of the Law. It may be granted that at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign Jeremiah would probably not have regarded an adhesion to Deuteronomy as completely satisfying his religious ideal. He had, we may well believe, been disillusioned as to the value of the Reformation. Yet the religious and moral requirements of Deuteronomy as distinguished from the ritual regulations must have still seemed to him largely valid, and if we can trust, as in the present writer's judgement we confidently may, the report of the address in vii, we have there a catalogue of the sins of Judah, which obedience to the Deuteronomic Law would have brought to an end. We may then regard the words as quite genuine, even on the assumption that 'my law' refers to the Book of the Law on which the Reformation was based. But this interpretation may not be necessary. The parallel clause, 'to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets,' probably provides us with the true explanation, so that we should take the word rendered 'law' in the earlier non-technical sense of instruction, as in Isa. i. 10, where 'the word of Yahweh' is parallel to 'the instruction of our God,' and the reference is to the prophetic utterance which follows.

5. rising up early and sending: cf. vii. 13, and elsewhere.

6. like Shiloh: see vii. 12–14.

and will make this city a curse to all the nations of
the earth. And the priests and the prophets and all 7
the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in
the house of the LORD. And it came to pass, when 8

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a curse to all the nations. The meaning is not, of course, that the ruined city will prove a curse to the nations, but that it will furnish them with so telling an example of utter destruction that they will employ it in their imprecations of disaster on their enemies, invoking on them a destruction similar to that which had befallen Jerusalem. This forms a contrast to the promise, 'In thee shall all the families of the earth bless themselves' (Gen. xii. 3: cf. xxii. 18), which means that in their invocations of blessing upon themselves the nations will utter the wish that they may be as blessed as Abraham (cf. iv. 2).

7. Jeremiah had taken up a position in which the whole of those who had gathered for the assembly at the Temple could hear his words. This audience included, in addition to the great body of the people, the official representatives of religion, the priests and prophets, but not the princes (see 10).

8. Jeremiah was heard without interruption to the end. This would be due not so much to the reverence in which the people held him, as to the fact that their dearest prejudices were not violated apparently till the close of the address. Denunciation of sin and threat of punishment were quite in order; Jeremiah was following here the path already taken by his predecessors and himself. To predict the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem was to touch the susceptibilities of the people in the tenderest point: cf. vii. 4. That it was bitterly resented by priests and prophets goes without saying; to them it would seem to be blasphemy, the penalty for which was death: cf. the case of Stephen (Acts vi, vii). The statement that 'all the people' joined the priests and prophets in the arrest of Jeremiah and threat of the death-penalty creates a difficulty. According to 11, the priests and prophets alone lay the charge against him, and the people are coupled with the princes as those before whom the accusation is brought; and similarly in 12–15 Jeremiah treats the people as judges rather than accusers. In 16 they unite with the princes in giving a verdict of acquittal. If the words 'and all the people' belong to the original text, we must suppose that they are not to be literally taken, and that while the multitude or a section of it assailed the prophet, he subsequently won them over to his side. This would harmonize with the well-known fickleness of the crowd, which is peculiarly susceptible to suggestion, and with the fact that in 24 it is said that Ahikam protected Jeremiah so that he was not given 'into the

Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the
LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people,
that the priests and the prophets and all the people
9 laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why
hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying,
This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be
desolate, without inhabitant? And all the people were
gathered unto Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

10 And when the princes of Judah heard these things,
they came up from the king's house unto the house of
the LORD; and they sat in the entry of the new gate of
11 the LORD's *house*. Then spake the priests and the pro-

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hand of the people to put him to death.' But this was probably at a later period. It would be better to omit 'and all the people' here as a mistaken insertion from the enumeration in the preceding verse.

9. The gravity of Jeremiah's offence did not lie simply in the content of his message, but also in his claim that so blasphemous an utterance was prompted by Divine inspiration. The priests and the prophets infer the origin of the utterance from its character; the princes and people accept Jeremiah's claim to have spoken in Yahweh's name seriously, and judge its character in that light.

The statement at the end of the verse confirms the view that 'and all the people' should be deleted in 8. Apparently the priests and prophets seized Jeremiah at the close of his address, and then the people crowded round the prophet and his accusers.

10. the princes of Judah. These were apparently members of the royal house, together it may be with other high officials. They had perhaps been at the king's council, but they came up to the Temple on learning of the tumult. A messenger may have brought the news, or they may have heard the noise themselves, since the palace was close to the Temple, standing, as 'they came up' indicates, on a somewhat lower elevation. When they arrived they sat in the gate to administer justice in the case.

the new gate. The identification is uncertain. It is often identified with that mentioned in xx. 2, and the designation 'new gate' is explained on the assumption that it was 'the upper gate' built by Jotham (2 Kings xv. 35).

11. When the judges had taken their seat the complainants stated their case. The words 'ye have heard with your ears' is

phets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This
man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against
this city, as ye have heard with your ears. Then spake 12
Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying,
The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and
against this city all the words that ye have heard. There- 13
fore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the
voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent
him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

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applicable only to the people, since the princes were not present at the assembly.

This man is worthy of death. It is not clear whether the Hebrew (cf. Deut. xix. 6) means this man has committed a capital offence, or this man deserves the death sentence. The material difference is inconsiderable: the religious authorities demand the death of the prophet on the same charge of blasphemy on which their successors judged Jesus to be worthy of death and perpetrated the execution of Stephen. But although the question whether Jeremiah's utterance constituted blasphemy was one on which an ecclesiastical court would pronounce a presumably expert decision, the final decision happily did not rest with priests and prophets but with princes and people. In the pre-exilic period the representatives of religion were not entrusted with the mischievous powers which they later acquired.

12–15. In a few noble and simple words Jeremiah makes his defence. In a sentence he reaffirms his claim to have been charged by God with the message he has just delivered. He renews his exhortation to amendment, and promises that judgement will be then averted. Of his own case he speaks neither with heroics nor unmanly entreaty. He recognizes the legal right of the tribunal to execute him, and confronts the prospect without theatrical defiance on the one hand or abject cowardice on the other, but with a serene expression of his willingness to accept the verdict his judges pronounce. Only he would be doing less than his duty were he so proudly to refuse all comment on his own case, that he failed to point out what a crime they would commit in slaying one, whose only fault had been his faithfulness in executing the commission his God and theirs had given him. It is a great scene which here passes before us, in which the prophet's bearing is wholly worthy of himself, and in which we do well to observe his unshaken conviction that his message had been entrusted to him by God Himself.

14 But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me
15 as is good and right in your eyes. Only know ye for
certain that, if ye put me to death, ye shall bring innocent
blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the
inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent
16 me unto you to speak all these words in your ears. Then
said the princes and all the people unto the priests and
to the prophets: This man is not worthy of death; for
he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.
17 Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake

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16. The princes and people have a wider outlook and more freedom from narrow prejudice than the official custodians of religion. They are impressed with the calm bearing and simple dignity of the prophet, and with his firm confidence in his Divine commission. They acquit him on the ground that he has spoken to them in the name of Yahweh. Not indeed that the mere claim to have done so would have been held sufficient. But they are swayed by the impression made on them by the man himself, and by the reflection that a prophet who proclaims an unpopular message at the risk of his life gives thereby ample security for his sincerity. Reading the message through the man rather than the man through the distastefulness of the message, they recognize that God is really its author, and that His spokesman must be permitted to say what apart from such a source would have been regarded as blasphemous.

17. The decision to acquit the prophet is now corroborated by an appeal to precedent. The 'elders of the land' may perhaps be an official title, standing for the heads of families throughout Judah. They had a legal status, and constituted an important element in the community and its organization. But the phrase may indicate age rather than status. If so, the meaning is that some of the old people, especially from the country districts ('the land'), related the story of Micah's drastic prediction as it had come down to them in their traditions. Micah was himself a countryman and a man of the people, unlike the aristocratic Isaiah of Jerusalem, and his words were more likely to be cherished among the countryfolk, whose attitude towards a prediction of the capital's downfall would be less bitter than the reception accorded it in the capital itself. There is no good reason for doubting the accuracy of the story told by 'the elders.'

to all the assembly of the people, saying, [a] Micaiah the 18

[a] Another reading is, *Micah*. See Micah i. 1.

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18. Micaiah. The form Micah read by the Q^{e}re is that familiar to us in the Book of Micah itself, but it is an abbreviated form. Even Micaiah is abbreviated from the older Micayahu. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, and a native of Moresheth-gath, which is said to have been near Eleutheropolis, and should probably be distinguished from Mareshah. His prophecy was uttered about a hundred years earlier. It is reported here and in Mic. iii. 12 with almost complete verbal agreement. It was as uncompromising as the denunciation for which Jeremiah had just been charged with a capital crime. It is only fair to recognize, however, that the situation had altered. In the interval Isaiah's doctrine of the inviolability of Zion had been vindicated by Sennacherib's overthrow and had hardened into a dogma; while the centralization of the worship had left the Temple as the sole seat of the cultus of Yahweh. The offence caused by Jeremiah was therefore greater than that caused by Micah. For in the reign of Hezekiah Jerusalem had no ecclesiastical monopoly, and it might have been destroyed without the cult of Yahweh coming to an end. But now the Temple was the only legitimate seat of the cultus, so that its destruction seemed to carry with it far more serious consequences than formerly.

The reference to Micah is one of great interest, in view of the almost complete absence of similar allusions in the prophetic literature. Jeremiah does not himself name any of the eighth-century prophets, deeply though he had been influenced by them, and especially by Hosea. Ezekiel and Jeremiah do not mention each other, though Ezekiel was much influenced by his senior contemporary and shared his pessimistic estimate of Judah's character and imminent ruin, while Jeremiah was actually in correspondence with the exiles among whom Ezekiel a few years later began to labour. Here the reference is made by the people, and its preservation is due to Baruch.

The quotation here has an important bearing on the problem raised by the prophecy in Mic. iv. 1–3, which is found also in Isa. ii. 2–4. The passage in Micah follows immediately on Mic. iii. 12 which is here quoted. If this was its original situation, it follows that the passage was uttered by Micah in the reign of Hezekiah, assuming the chronological trustworthiness of the statement in this verse. Various explanations are given of the inclusion in both Isaiah and Micah of this prophecy. Some think it was independently derived from an older prophet, some that it was original with one of these and borrowed by the other or inserted by an editor, others regard it as a post-exilic oracle inserted in

Morashtite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: [a] Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.
19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and intreat the

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[a] See Micah iii. 12.

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both books. The commentaries on Isaiah and Micah must be consulted for a discussion of this question (the present writer inclines to the view that the oracle is post-exilic); here it is necessary simply to draw attention to the bearing on it of the present passage. If we could assume that Mic. iv. 1–3 was originally attached to Mic. iii. 12, we should then be able to affirm that the passage was certainly no later than Hezekiah's reign. It is, however, most unlikely that this was the case. Our present narrative shows clearly that Micah's prediction was one of unrelieved disaster, which was not fulfilled simply on account of the king's repentance and prayers.

the mountain of the house: i.e. the summit on which the Temple was built.

the high places of a forest. The LXX reads the singular, which should probably be adopted, especially since the singular as written at this time would be indistinguishable from the plural. The term 'high place of a forest' may simply mean 'a wooded height,' i.e. the Temple will be destroyed and its site covered with trees. But possibly it may be used in the technical sense of 'sanctuary,' and in that case the meaning will be that in place of the splendid building which is now the exclusive sanctuary of Yahweh, thronged from all parts of Judah, there will be simply a forest sanctuary, some rude structure to which only the few dwellers in the sparsely populated district would resort. Rothstein thinks that the LXX rendering 'grove' presupposes a different Hebrew text, and reads 'the thicket (*lisbakh*) of a forest' or 'the thickets of a forest,' as in Isa. ix. 17.

19. This result of Micah's preaching is otherwise unknown to us, but there is no reason to doubt its historicity. It accords with the principle expressed in xviii. 7, 8 (see the note) that timely repentance may avert a threatened judgement. Notice the conjunction of Judah with the king in the infliction or withholding of the death penalty. We should probably continue with plurals (so LXX, Syr., Vulg.), 'did not they fear,' &c.

intreat the favour. The Hebrew means literally 'smooth the

favour of the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus should we commit great evil against our own souls. And there 20
was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD,

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face,' i.e. mollify. This very anthropomorphic expression was probably a technical term in the sacrificial vocabulary, meaning to soothe the deity by an offering, and thus remove the frown which wrinkled his face. Presumably it was far more ancient than the Hebrew people, but it is remarkable that in the prophetic literature it appears very late, being found elsewhere only in Zech. vii. 2, viii. 21, 22, Mal. i. 9.

Thus should we commit: i.e. if we put Jeremiah to death. The Hebrew is more vivid, 'But we are committing.' It was an evil to shed innocent blood, a graver evil when it was the blood of Yahweh's messenger. But their guilt would be aggravated, since they had the precedent of Micah before them. The penitence of king and people had received the stamp of the Divine approval, manifested in the remission of penalty. If Jeremiah is murdered they will only be sealing their own death-warrant. The narrative is not formally concluded, but we are intended to understand that Jeremiah leaves the scene unhurt, though if glances could kill he would doubtless have fallen a victim to the envenomed hatred of his baffled adversaries.

souls: better **lives.**

20–23. See vol. i, p. 17. This episode is related to show how grave was the risk which Jeremiah ran. The source of the narrative is uncertain, but in all probability we owe it to Baruch. Cornill suggested in his edition of the Hebrew text that the passage should be placed after 24. It is true that it joins on awkwardly to 19; the reader would at first suppose that the elders of the land were still speaking, but soon sees that this is out of the question. But 24 also would connect badly with 16–19. Jeremiah is saved from imminent death by the verdict of the princes and people, endorsed by 'the elders of the land' with their appeal to ancient precedent. The reference to Ahikam as his supporter, who stood between him and death, cannot accordingly refer to this scene. It follows 20-23 quite well; the point of its insertion is that, while Uriah fell a victim to the pertinacious enmity of the king, Jeremiah escaped. We know nothing further of Uriah than we learn from this passage. Apparently he went beyond Jeremiah and attacked Jehoiakim, presumably somewhat later, since Jeremiah's utterance at this time which Uriah repeated was more drastic than anything he had said before.

Uriah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-jearim; and he prophesied against this city and against this land according
21 to all the words of Jeremiah: and when Jehoiakim the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes, heard his words, the king sought to put him to death; but when Uriah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and
22 went into Egypt: and Jehoiakim the king sent men into

Kiriath-jearim. The site of this city is not certain; Robinson's identification with Qaryet el-'Enab (or, as it is now more commonly called, Abū Ghōsh), which is a few miles north-west of Jerusalem on the road to Jaffa, is that most commonly adopted. Some prefer Khirbet 'Erma, near Bēt 'Atāb. The place is chiefly famous as for twenty years the home of the ark (1 Sam. vii. 2).

21. with all his mighty men: omitted in the LXX, perhaps correctly, as the expression is not employed elsewhere in the book.

he was afraid . . . Egypt: cf. Exod. ii. 14, 15, 1 Kings xi. 40. But while Moses was safe from Pharaoh in Midian, and Jeroboam from Solomon in Egypt, Uriah could not escape from Jehoiakim, the vassal of Egypt. The king sent to his suzerain to request the extradition of the prophet.

22. Elnathan . . . Egypt. The LXX omits these words, and in the judgement of several scholars, including Orelli, correctly. In xxxvi. 12 he is mentioned as one of the princes, who heard Baruch read the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies. He was also (xxxvi. 25) one of the three who entreated the king not to burn the roll. It is urged that a man who took this stand would not be likely to have played the part here assigned to him. Moreover the present text, with its repetition of 'into Egypt,' is undeniably awkward. It is not easy, however, just in view of the former difficulty, to understand how any scribe should have selected Elnathan for such a mission. Probably the disputed words are authentic, in which case we might with advantage omit 'men into Egypt,' which has apparently arisen by incorrect repetition of the same words from the latter part of the verse. The LXX was presumably made from the present Hebrew text after this expansion by dittography had taken place; the omission of 22^b was then either accidental, the scribe writing as far as 'Egypt' in 22^a, and his eye passing to the same word at the end of the verse, or deliberate and occasioned partly by the awkwardness of the text, partly by the same consideration, which has weighed with modern scholars, that Elnathan, who had pleaded for the preservation of the roll, was hardly the man to have fetched Uriah from Egypt. But we must not overrate the significance of either action. In the

Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and certain
men with him, into Egypt: and they fetched forth Uriah 23
out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king;
who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into
the graves of the [a] common people. But the hand of 24

[a] Heb. *sons of the people.*

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latter he was simply the king's agent, who must do his master's bidding; and if Uriah had attacked the king, Elnathan may well have justified his action to himself as bringing to his merited fate a man guilty of high treason. Nor does the entreaty that the roll should not be burnt imply any definite adhesion to the prophetic party. Superstition might have prompted it just as well as enlightened religion. Even pirates dread the bad luck which the mutilation of a Bible might bring with it. If he is to be identified with the Elnathan mentioned in 2 Kings xxiv. 8, he was the father of Nehushta, one of Jehoiakim's wives and the mother of Jehoiachin. As the king's father-in-law he would be well suited for a diplomatic mission to Egypt.

Achbor. According to 2 Kings xxii. 12, 14 he formed part of the deputation sent by Josiah to Huldah to learn Yahweh's will with reference to the Book of the Law. The name means 'mouse'; it is noteworthy that animal names seem to have become prominent about this period, Shaphan (24) meaning 'rock-badger.' See Gray, *Hebrew Proper Names*, pp. 98, 103, 113-5.

23. Extradition was apparently a well-recognized feature of international politics. Jehoiakim's application would be all the more favoured that he had been appointed by Egypt, and any attack on him would be regarded as inimical to her interests in Judah.

the graves of the common people. This is unquestionably the correct text; the LXX reads 'of his people.' But it is intrinsically improbable that the prophet should be buried in his family grave, and the LXX testifies against its own reading by retaining 'cast.' The king's vengeance pursued his victim after he was dead. He did not indeed give him 'the burial of an ass' which was later predicted for himself (xxii. 19), but he deprived him of the burial with his fathers which was so much prized by every Hebrew (see *Enc. Bib.* 5138, and note on xxii. 18, 19). Those who were too poor to possess a family grave had to be buried in the common burial-ground, since it would, at any rate in earlier times, have seemed a desecration to admit strangers into the family tomb. Where the public burial-ground was situated we do not know, but from 2 Kings xxiii. 6 we may infer that it was near 'the brook Kidron.'

24. While this was the fate of Uriah, Jeremiah was preserved, Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

27 [BS] In the beginning of the reign of [a] Jehoiakim the

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[a] Properly, *Zedekiah*, as in some ancient authorities. See vv. 3, 12, 20, ch. xxviii. 1.

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perhaps at the same time, by the powerful influence of Ahikam. Like Achbor, Ahikam had been a member of the deputation to Huldah after the discovery of the Book of the Law, if we can assume his identity with the Ahikam mentioned in 2 Kings xxii. 14. He was the father of Gedaliah, who worthily continued the family tradition. It is questionable whether Shaphan is to be identified with Shaphan the scribe, who was another member of the deputation, since we should naturally expect the name of the father to precede that of the son in the list of those who formed it (2 Kings xxii. 14). In view of the fact that the people had protected Jeremiah the latter part of the verse is surprising. But the mob is proverbially fickle, and the prophet's enemies would no doubt seek to retrieve their defeat by playing on its prejudices.

xxvii–xxix. JEREMIAH CONTRADICTS THE PREDICTIONS OF A SPEEDY RETURN FROM EXILE.

These chapters are closely connected not only by community of subject-matter in that all three are directed against the optimists who hoped to reverse the disaster of 597 B.C., but in that they unite in exhibiting certain peculiarities which suggest that at one time they circulated independently. They show a preference for the shortened termination in -yah, instead of -yahū, of names compounded with the Divine Name. The longer forms also occur, and in some cases both types appear side by side in the same verse. Nevertheless the proportion of the shorter to the longer form is characteristic, and it is noteworthy that the prophet's own name appears several times in these chapters in the shortened form, but nowhere else in the book. It is also striking that whereas in the rest of the book the designation 'the prophet' is appended to Jeremiah in little more than a sixth of its total occurrences, here it is used fairly frequently, i. e. in xxviii, xxix. It ought to be said, however, that this is not so significant as it seems, since Jeremiah is here definitely represented as in conflict with the prophets, so that the addition of the designation has a special appropriateness, particularly in xxviii, where he and the prophet Hananiah, who also is constantly so described, confront son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word unto Jeremiah

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each other. Even so it must be acknowledged that it is a peculiarity of this section. Further, whereas elsewhere in Jeremiah except xxxiv. 1, xxxix. 5, which is derived from 2 Kings, the more accurate form Nebuchadrezzar is always found, in this section the later form Nebuchadnezzar is employed eight times, the more correct form only once (xxix. 21). Lastly, the LXX diverges from the Hebrew in these chapters to a quite exceptional degree. Graf, in his careful discussion, has reduced the significance of these phenomena by reference to parallels, but the combination of peculiarities is too great to be explained by the carelessness of copyists. We should have to explain why this cause did not operate on a similar scale elsewhere. Giesebrecht suggests that these chapters may have been copied out for circulation among the exiles in Babylon, and having thus an independent existence were affected by causes which did not affect the rest of the book. Duhm, while admitting not a little of the chapters to be derived from the memoirs of Baruch, yet considers that they were inserted in the book much later than the greater part of xxxii–xlv.

The position of these chapters after xxvi may be due to the fact that here also Jeremiah's gloomy predictions of ruin are vehemently opposed by the prophets.

xxvii, xxviii. Jeremiah Contradicts the Optimism of the Prophets in Judah.

These chapters are linked together by the account they give of Jeremiah's attack on the optimistic forecast of the prophets in Judah that the Babylonian dominion would soon be ended and the Temple vessels be restored. In xxvii the prophets are referred to collectively, while in xxviii we read of Jeremiah's encounter with an individual representative of the order. Yet there are noteworthy points of difference : xxvii is written in a much more diffuse style than xxviii, though the former exists in the LXX in a much more abbreviated form ; xxvii is written in the first person, xxviii almost entirely in the third ; xxvii is introduced by a very general indication of time which contains the palpable blunder of Jehoiakim for Zedekiah, whereas an exact date stands at the head of xxviii. Moreover xxviii. 1 by the words 'it came to pass the same year' implies that a year has been mentioned in xxvii, but that is not true of the present text. It is probable that the two chapters in their original form constituted a single connected narrative from the pen of Baruch, in which Jeremiah was referred to in the third person. The statement in xxviii. 1 that the incidents recorded in xxviii belonged to the same year as those recorded in xxvii is not only obviously correct but compels us to insert the year at the beginning of xxvii. Since xxvii. 1 is absent

2 from the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD to me:

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in the LXX and does not correspond to what xxviii. 1 entitles us to expect, we should eliminate it as a mere repetition of xxvi. 1; and substitute for it, with Cornill who is followed by Duhm, the greater part of xxviii. 1^a, reading 'And it came to pass in the fourth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the fifth month, that this word came unto Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying.' Chap. xxvii has also experienced a good deal of expansion, which we can trace partially by the aid of the LXX. It may be added that Rothstein reconstructs the original order substantially as follows: xxviii. 1-9, xxvii. 2-4, 12^b, 8-11, xxviii. 10-17, xxvii. 16-22, though it must be borne in mind that these portions have to be taken as Baruch's work only when the additions of later redactors have been removed. This rearrangement is certainly ingenious, but it involves excessive transposition, and it is doubtful whether, apart from this, it presents a more probable view as to the order of the incidents.

In spite of Schmidt's verdict that the story of the bands and yokes is 'scarcely historical' (*Enc. Bib.* 2387), there seems to be no solid ground for doubting the general accuracy of the narrative. That in the fourth year of Zedekiah (594-593 B. C.) a movement to throw off the Babylonian yoke was on foot among the states of Palestine enumerated in xxvii. 3 is exposed to no suspicion in itself, and it is confirmed by the fact (if we can regard it as such) that Zedekiah went to Babylon in the same year (li. 59). He may have gone voluntarily to clear himself of the suspicion that he had meditated rebellion, or he may have been summoned there by Nebuchadnezzar. The coincidence can hardly be accidental. Further, Cornill raises the question whether the fact that Pharaoh Necoh died in 594 may have occasioned the movement in Palestine, since it may have been thought that his successor Psammetichus II would adopt a different policy from his father, who was bound by his agreement with Nebuchadnezzar. In any case Psammetichus was prevented by his war with Ethiopia from attacking Babylon, and by this cardinal fact of the situation Cornill explains the failure of the coalition to effect anything. Nothing could be attempted without the promise of support from Egypt, and, as that was not forthcoming, the Palestinian movement against Babylon came to nothing. We have no substantial grounds for assuming that Zedekiah was in any way committed to the coalition, though he was obviously in danger of yielding to the pressure from within and without. How far Jeremiah's influence co-operated with the conditions of the period to bring about the failure of the plot we are not in a position to say, nor whether the fulfilment of his prediction of Hananiah's death did much to persuade the leaders in Judah that he saw more clearly than they

Make thee bands and [a] bars, and put them upon thy

[a] See Lev. xxvi. 13.

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did what the issue of rebellion would be. It is a gratifying sign of a return to a less prejudiced attitude towards the predictive element in prophecy that scholars so free from traditional bias as Giesebrecht, Duhm, and Cornill, should affirm their full belief in the statement of xxviii. 17 that Jeremiah's prediction of Hananiah's death within the year was fulfilled.

xxvii. 1–11. Yahweh bade me make bands and bars, and send word to the five kings by the messengers they had sent to Zedekiah, that Yahweh the Mighty Creator had given all these lands into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, and all nations should serve him and his successors, till the time of retribution on his dynasty should come. The nation that refused to submit to him should be consumed. Let them not listen to the lying predictions of freedom, which can end only in exile and death. The nation that will serve the king of Babylon shall be left undisturbed in its own land.

12–15. I warned Zedekiah also to submit, so as to live and not die, and refuse to listen to the prophets who say in Yahweh's name that they should serve the king of Babylon. They prophesy falsely, and ruin will be the portion of those who obey their behests.

16–22. I warned the priests and people not to believe the prophets who foretold that the Temple vessels would soon be restored, but to serve the king of Babylon and save themselves and the city. I challenged them if they were really Yahweh's prophets to pray that the vessels which were still left should not be taken to Babylon. For Yahweh has said that those which Nebuchadnezzar had not taken when Jeconiah was carried into captivity should be taken to Babylon and remain there till He restored them.

xxviii. 1–11. Hananiah the prophet announced to Jeremiah at the Temple, before the priests and all the people, that Yahweh had declared that He had broken the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, and that within two years He would bring the Temple vessels, with Jeconiah and all the exiles. Jeremiah replied that he wished it might be so, but that the older prophets had prophesied of disaster, and the prophet of peace could be recognized as truly Yahweh's messenger only when his word had been accomplished. Then Hananiah broke the bar from Jeremiah's neck, and said that thus Yahweh would within two years break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar from the neck of all the nations. Then Jeremiah went his way.

12–17. Then Yahweh bade Jeremiah tell Hananiah that bars of iron should replace the wooden bars he had broken. For He had put an iron yoke on the neck of the nations, and they should serve Nebuchadnezzar. Then Jeremiah told Hananiah that Yahweh

3 neck; and send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the children of Ammon, and to the king of Tyre, and to the king of Zidon, by the hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto
4 Zedekiah king of Judah; and give them a charge unto

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had not sent him, but he had made the people to trust in a lie, and should in consequence die that year. So Hananiah died in the seventh month.

xxvii. 1. It has long been recognized that the reference to Jehoiakim is mistaken, and that the events recorded really happened in the reign of Zedekiah, as is clear from the statements of this chapter (3, 12, 20) and the chronological note at the beginning of xxviii. But the mere substitution of Zedekiah for Jehoiakim does not yield a satisfactory text. The beginning of Zedekiah's reign, when he had just sworn fealty to Babylon, was certainly no occasion for projects of revolt; moreover xxviii. 1 requires a definite date, viz. the fourth year of Zedekiah, to have been mentioned here. Hence we cannot follow the LXX and simply strike out the verse. For a probable restoration of the original text see the Introduction to xxvii, xxviii (p. 40).

2. to me: is omitted by the LXX. We should either omit it, or read 'to Jeremiah,' the last letter being an abbreviation for 'Jeremiah.'

bands and bars: i.e. a yoke, the wooden bars being fastened together by thongs. Such symbolic actions were not uncommon among the prophets; a close parallel is to be found in 1 Kings xxii. 11, where Zedekiah the courtier-prophet, who opposed Micaiah, as Hananiah opposed Jeremiah, 'made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until they be consumed.'

3. and send them. Only one yoke is mentioned in 2, and this is put on the prophet's own neck. This verse suggests to the reader that five yokes were made and sent to the five kings. But since 'them' in 3 is identical with 'them' in 2, the reference must be to the bands and bars of the yoke worn by Jeremiah, and these were obviously not sent, since Jeremiah was wearing the yoke at a later time (xxviii. 10). The text is accordingly corrupt, and we should omit 'them,' with Lucian's edition of the LXX, reading simply 'and send to the king,' i.e. send a message. The message was enforced by the symbolism of the yoke which typified subjection to Babylon, but no yoke was sent. The countries here named occur in the same order in xxv. 21, 22. The messengers had no doubt been sent to Jerusalem to plot rebellion against Babylon.

their masters, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the
God of Israel: Thus shall ye say unto your masters; I 5
have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon
the face of the earth, by my great power and by my outstretched arm; and I give it unto whom it seemeth right
unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the 6
hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant;
and the beasts of the field also have I given him to serve
him. [S] And all the nations shall serve him, and his son, 7
and his son's son, until the time of his own land come:
and then many nations and great kings shall serve them-

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5. Yahweh the God of Israel is proclaimed to these heathen monarchs as the Creator of the universe, whose right to dispose of it as He will rests upon the fact that He has made it. The LXX omits 'the man . . . the earth,' probably because by an oversight the translator passed from the first to the second mention of the earth.

my outstretched arm. The expression is more generally (and more appropriately) used with reference to God's great acts of deliverance (e.g. Exod. vi. 6, Deut. iv. 34) or chastisement (xxi. 5, and the refrain in Isa. ix. 8—x. 4, v. 25–30). It is used as here with reference to creation in the probably post-exilic passage xxxii. 17.

6. my servant. See xxv. 9.

the beasts of the field. This is at first sight a rather strange addition. The dominion of man is defined in Gen. i. 26–28, on which Ps. viii. 6–8 rests. It is a rule over all the lower creation in earth, air, and sea. It belongs to mankind as such, and so preeminently to the lord of mankind, or at least of 'all these lands.' It would be rather precarious to affirm that this clause is of Jeremianic origin: cf. xxviii. 14, Dan. ii. 38.

7. This verse is omitted in the LXX; it has been regarded as a later addition by Movers, Hitzig, and Kuenen, and most recent commentators. It is unfitting that in a warning to submit to Babylon such a reference to Babylon's fall should be included. The passage rests apparently on xxv. 12, 14, and the enumeration of the kings as three seems to be due to a combination of the reference to Evil-Merodach (lii. 31 = 2 Kings xxv. 27) with the narrative of Belshazzar's overthrow. It had the advantage of substituting a vaguer definition of the period than the inexact seventy years which is found in the parallel passages.

serve themselves of him. See notes on xxv. 11, 14.

8 selves of him. [BS] And it shall come to pass, that the
nation and the kingdom which will not serve the same
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and that will not put
their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that
nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and
with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have
9 consumed them by his hand. But as for you, hearken ye
not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your
dreams, nor to your soothsayers, nor to your sorcerers,
which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of
10 Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you
far from your land; and that I should drive you out and ye
11 should perish. But the nation that shall bring their neck
under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him,
that *nation* will I let remain in their own land, saith the
LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

12 And I spake to Zedekiah king of Judah according to

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8 continues 6, or perhaps better 6^a.

will not serve . . . and that: to be omitted, with the LXX.

consumed them by. The Hebrew is very questionable: we should probably read 'given them into,' changing one letter.

9. The five kings are warned not to trust their own optimistic foretellers of the future. Five classes are enumerated (for 'dreams' we should probably read 'dreamers' with several versions), but whether the writer intended us to discriminate sharply between them is uncertain. We may have merely a rhetorical accumulation of terms, as if he would say, Try all types of those who profess to foretell the future; they will all prophesy smooth things, for the heathen have only false prophets, but do not believe them or you will be ruined. Cf. the false prophets confronted by Micaiah, 1 Kings xxii. 5–28.

10. to remove you. Certainly it was not the intention of these prophets to secure the exile of their nation, in which they would be involved, with all the additional odium attached to discredited advisers, but if they had deliberately contemplated such an issue they could not have given advice more calculated to reach it.

and that . . . perish. This clause is absent in the LXX, and has probably been introduced from 15.

12. I spake. The first person is surprising both here and in 16,

all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke
of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and
live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, 13
by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath
spoken concerning the nation that will not serve the king
of Babylon? And hearken not unto the words of the 14
prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve
the king of Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you.
For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, but they 15
prophesy falsely in my name; that I might drive you
out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that
prophesy unto you. Also I spake to the priests and to 16

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since in the preceding verses Yahweh is the speaker and Jeremiah the recipient of the message. Possibly the meaning may be that Jeremiah's message to the kings still continues to the effect that he had given the same counsel to Zedekiah, the priests and the people, as he is giving to them (so Stade). But such awkwardness of expression would stamp the passage as secondary. It would be simpler to read here and in 16 'said Jeremiah,' with Giesebrecht (see note on 2), or 'And thou shalt speak.'

Bring your necks. The counsel is formally addressed to the king only, but his action involves that of many more, hence the plural. After these words the LXX omits the rest of this verse, the whole of 13, and 14[a] (as far as 'saying'). Duhm prefers this, and carries this preference to the logical conclusion of striking out the last clause of 14 and the whole of 15. But it is more probable that the Hebrew is correct, since the bare phrase 'bring your necks' is an otherwise unexampled expression. The Greek rendering is due to an oversight of the translator or a scribe, whose eye passed from 'serve' in 12 to 'serve' in 14. He also omitted 'under the yoke of the king of Babylon,' because through this oversight the king of Babylon was mentioned in two consecutive clauses.

16–22. In these verses there is an astonishing divergence between the Hebrew and the Septuagint, the latter containing about a quarter only of the former. Verse 17 is omitted, similarly 18[b], while for 19–22 the LXX reads simply: 'For thus saith the LORD, And as for the residue of the vessels which the king of Babylon took not, when he carried away Jeconiah from Jerusalem, they shall be carried to Babylon, saith the LORD.' The main difference between the two texts is that the LXX simply predicts that the vessels still all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Hearken

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left in Jerusalem will be taken to Babylon, while the Hebrew adds the prediction that eventually they will be brought back again. A good many scholars prefer the LXX. And it is undeniable that stylistically it is much superior, and that we may well suspect that the hand of a diffuse supplementer has here, as so often elsewhere, expanded the original text. Verse 17 interrupts the connexion between 16 and 18, which refer to the Temple vessels, with an inappropriate reiteration of the theme of the earlier part of the chapter. It should probably be omitted. Verse 18^b ('that the vessels . . . to Babylon') is not indispensable, but its omission makes the sentence abrupt and ambiguous, since the content of the intercession might either be that the vessels should be brought back or that the vessels which remained should not be taken away. Accordingly the Hebrew is here to be preferred; the eye of the scribe or translator apparently passed from *bi* to *ki* (19). The enumeration of the vessels that were left behind would have been unnecessary for Jeremiah's contemporaries, and may have been added from 2 Kings xxv. 13 ff. The omission in the LXX of any prediction that the vessels would be brought back might be due to the fact that those specially enumerated in 19 were not restored, since the Babylonians had broken them up for convenience of transport (2 Kings xxv. 13). But in favour of the LXX it may be urged that this prediction of restoration is hardly likely to have been made in the same breath as the threat that the vessels would be carried away, whereas the supplementers loved such modifications; the expression 'the day that I visit them' is very strange when applied to inanimate objects; and the insertion of the clause may be due to the account of the restoration of the vessels given in Ezra i. 7–11. In this passage the vessels restored are simply defined as those 'which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem.' Apparently this covers both those taken away when Jehoiachin was deported to Babylon, and those taken when the city was destroyed. It seems best then to regard the prediction of restoration as a later insertion in the Hebrew text. It may be added that Giesebrecht considers the LXX text to have arisen largely through abbreviation of the Hebrew, but he rejects 17 and the prediction of restoration in 22 ('and there . . . this place'), with the latter part of 21 ('concerning . . . Jerusalem').

16. the priests. A warning addressed to the ecclesiastics was in Jeremiah's time always in place, since they counted for so much in the politics of the day, supporting with all the weight of their religious influence the struggle for freedom from Babylon advocated by the prophets. But it was specially appropriate that the warning not to expect the Temple vessels to be restored, but rather to anticipate

not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto
you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the LORD's house
shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for
they prophesy a lie unto you. Hearken not unto them; 17
serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should
this city become a desolation? But if they be pro- 18
phets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let
them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts,
that the vessels which are left in the house of the
LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah, and at
Jerusalem, go not to Babylon. For thus saith the LORD 19
of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea,
and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of
the vessels that are left in this city, which Nebuchad- 20
nezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away
captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,
from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah
and Jerusalem; yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the 21
God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the
house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah,
and at Jerusalem: They shall be carried to Babylon, and 22
there shall they be, until the day that I visit them, saith

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that all the vessels which remained would follow them to Babylon, should be addressed to the custodians of the Temple in whose charge they were.

now shortly. The LXX omits, whether rightly it is difficult to say, but the words give the correct sense, as we see from xxviii. 3, 'within two full years.'

19. Cf. lii. 17. See Dr. Skinner's notes on 1 Kings vii. 15–39, 2 Kings xxv. 13–17.

20. nobles. The word is of Aramaic origin. It occurs in 1 Kings xxi. 8, 11; if it is not a gloss in this passage, as some think, its use is probably due to the origination of the narrative in the Northern Kingdom. Otherwise it is a late word, being found especially in Nehemiah. In the present passage it is perhaps a sign of late date; if so, this clause is a latter addition. It is found also in xxxix. 6.

the Lord; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

28 [B] And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azzur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the Lord, in the presence of the priests and of

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xxviii. 1. If the view expressed in the introduction to xxvii, xxviii is correct, the former part of this verse should be transferred to the beginning of xxvii (except of course 'in the same year' and the reference to the beginning of the reign), see pp. 39, 40. We should probably connect this chapter closely with xxvii, reading simply 'Then Hananiah . . . spake saying.'

Hananiah. Nothing further is known of him than is recorded here. On the estimate we should form of him and the 'false prophets' in general see Robertson Smith's article 'Prophet,' *Enc. Brit.* 9th ed., vol. xix, p. 817, with Cheyne's contribution to the article 'Prophetic Literature' (*Enc. Bib.* 3875-8), which quotes the most important points in Robertson Smith's article, and A. B. Davidson's *Old Testament Prophecy*, pp. 285-308. There is no reason to doubt Hananiah's sincerity; he probably believed in his own inspiration, and was fanatically convinced that his forecast would be verified. But he and his class lived on traditional religion with its blending of old and new, the semi-heathenism of ancient Israel with the prophecy of the eighth century (especially Isaiah's doctrine of the indestructibility of Jerusalem) and the ideals of the reformers; they went on repeating formulae once valid, now obsolete; they lacked the ethical note of the higher prophecy, while they laid emphasis on a full and correct ritual; hence they ignored the moral defects of the people, while they ardently desired that ceremonial defects should be repaired by the restoration of the Temple vessels.

Gibeon: probably to be identified with *el-Jib*, a mile to the north of *Neby Samwil*, where Mizpah of Benjamin stood (see xli. 10-15), and five miles north-west of Jerusalem. It was famous in Hebrew history as the home of the Gibeonites who tricked Joshua into an alliance, and the defeat of the Canaanite confederacy formed against them in consequence (Joshua ix. 3—x. 15); for the ghastly contest between the twelve warriors of Joab and the twelve warriors of Abner (2 Sam. ii. 12-17); for Joab's treacherous murder of Amasa (2 Sam. xx. 8-12); for the choice of Solomon (1 Kings iii. 4-15).

unto me: should probably be deleted, since the narrative speaks of Jeremiah in the third person.

all the people, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the 2
God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king
of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into 3
this place all the vessels of the LORD'S house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place,
and carried them to Babylon: and I will bring again to 4
this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,

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2. I have broken the yoke. The choice of the figure was presumably suggested by the presence of Jeremiah wearing his yoke, symbolic of the Babylonian suzerainty. Hananiah introduces his prediction with the prophetic formula claiming Divine origin for it.

3. We do not know how Hananiah was led to fix on two years as the period within which the restoration would be accomplished. It is the temptation of prophets to enhance their credit by venturing on a definiteness in prediction, which the event may or may not justify. Ambiguity is safer, since it provides ways of escape, as the givers of oracles in Greece were well aware. With prophets like Hananiah and Zedekiah, the opponent of Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 11, 24), the wish was too much the father of the thought: the sincere but lower type of patriotism which dominated them, together with the religious conviction that Yahweh was on their side, blinded them to the real facts; their enthusiasm led them to discount the odds against them. At the same time Hananiah was upheld in his belief by the sympathy of his fellow prophets and the people generally, also by the confidence felt in the neighbouring nations that revolt, at least if supported by Egypt, would be successful. He probably believed what he said, he was apparently in the prophetic ecstasy at the time, and mistook the thoughts which surged up in this self-induced state for Divine revelations.

all: omitted by the LXX. It could easily fall out or be inserted, since the next two consonants are identical with it. It is omitted in 4, but is there followed by similar not identical consonants. It should probably be retained. Observe that the vessels of the Temple take precedence even of the king.

that Nebuchadnezzar . . . to Babylon: omitted by the LXX.

4. The LXX reads simply 'and Jeconiah with the captives of Judah, for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.' The additions in the Hebrew are superfluous, they need not on that account be secondary.

Jeconiah. That while Zedekiah was on the throne Hananiah should have ventured to predict in so many words the restoration

with all the captives of Judah, that went to Babylon, saith
the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Baby-
5 lon. Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet
Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the pre-
sence of all the people that stood in the house of the
6 LORD, even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD
do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast
prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's
house, and all them of the captivity, from Babylon unto
7 this place. Nevertheless hear thou now this word that

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of Jehoiachin, describing him moreover, if the Hebrew text is sound, as the king of Judah, is remarkable. Naturally the exiles regarded him as still the legitimate king, and probably many of those left behind agreed with them, but Zedekiah would scarcely relish the prospect of deposition, nor, we may imagine, would the upstarts who had supplanted the earlier administrators. Jeremiah in his reply (6) makes no specific reference to Jehoiachin.

5. The characteristic insertion of 'the prophet' before the personal name, which occurs three times in 5, 6, is omitted in each case in the LXX, and similarly in the rest of the chapter and in xxix.

6. As a patriot, Jeremiah could wish that the wound of his country might be healed. His language is not sarcastic; for the sake of the exiles themselves, for the better administration of the State, he would be glad of their return. But he is not led astray by his preferences, and while the desire that it might be so is sincere, he is assured that it will not be so. It is to be noticed that he does not meet Hananiah's 'Thus saith Yahweh' by a counter-oracle at this point (he does so in 13), but after an expression of sympathy with the desire itself, by an argument from history.

7. His own conviction makes no impression on his antagonists, his prophetic certainty is incommunicable. He must therefore appeal to experience, and does so in the notable utterance of 7–9, which shows how truly Jeremiah interpreted the significance of the great prophets in whose succession he knew himself to stand. They had been prophets of woe, as Jeremiah himself; only when history had confirmed the prediction of a prophet who spoke of peace, could his claim that God had sent him be admitted. So the future would decide whether Hananiah was right; but let him and the people ponder well the significance of the precedent. The passage is very important for its testimony to the predominantly

I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people:
The prophets that have been before me and before thee 8
of old prophesied against many countries, and against
great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.
The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word 9
of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet
be known, [a] that the LORD hath truly sent him. Then 10
Hananiah the prophet took the bar from off the prophet
Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. And Hananiah spake in 11

[a] †Or, *whom the* LORD *hath truly sent*

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pessimistic character of pre-exilic prophecy in its great representatives. It must receive its due weight in the consideration of the much debated question touching the extent to which prophecies of a happy future were uttered by the prophets to whom they are at present assigned, or have been inserted by later editors in their writings. That many such prophecies originated in the latter way can hardly be denied, but it is a great exaggeration of a sound principle to relegate such passages as a whole to the post-exilic period.

8. The scope of the older prophecy is to be observed; it was not limited to Israel, but embraced many countries and great kingdoms (see vol. i, p. 78).

evil. It is tempting to adopt the reading of some MSS. and of the Vulgate 'famine,' since it is awkward that the general term for disaster should be coupled with two specific types of calamity. It is not unusual for Jeremiah to speak of sword, famine, and pestilence. This combination may, however, be responsible for the reading 'famine' here, and the use of 'war' instead of the sword suggests that we have not that combination in this passage. The LXX omits 'and of evil, and of pestilence.'

9. The close of the sentence is rather carelessly expressed. The meaning required is that then it shall be known that Yahweh has truly sent that prophet. Till then the Divine origin of his message must remain in doubt.

10. Hananiah is not at all impressed by Jeremiah's appeal to experience. He snaps the yoke on Jeremiah's neck, affirming that thus Yahweh would break the yoke of Babylon from the neck of the nations. The act is something more than a mere symbol, it embodies the prophetic word which is endowed with a Divine energy that works out its own fulfilment (see vol. i, pp. 77, 78).

11. The LXX omits 'of Nebuchadnezzar' and 'within two full the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the Lord: Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon within two full years from off the neck of all the nations. And the prophet Jeremiah went his

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years,' in both cases correctly; the latter addition has been made from 2. In such a situation brevity is a sign of authenticity.

Jeremiah went his way. It is surprising that he makes no reply. Cornill argues forcibly that Jeremiah could not have remained silent in response to such a challenge without denying his God and abandoning his people to a lie. Accordingly he strikes out the clause as a gloss. There is much to be said for this view. It is hard to believe that Jeremiah was shaken in his own conviction by Hananiah's action. His opponent may have sincerely believed in his own inspiration, he may have snapped the yoke on Jeremiah's neck in a prophetic ecstasy, and the ring of certainty may have been heard in his utterance 'Thus saith Yahweh.' But Jeremiah's own convictions were not such as could be disturbed by prophetic states, even though they were not consciously simulated, or prophetic formulae, sincerely though they might be repeated. His insight into God's purpose was not a thing of yesterday, his assurance was too deeply rooted to bend before this breath of opposition. He was a candid and a humble man; but he could not have seriously asked himself the question whether Hananiah might not after all be right. We may then rest assured that whatever he did, he had no intention of suggesting that he doubted his own message. But would not silence have suggested this? It might no doubt be urged that his attitude had been too long and too well known for such an inference to be drawn; that he had withstood the prophets too long for any significance to be attached to his leaving Hananiah in possession of the field; that he had just given his testimony with the utmost directness. And yet we may doubt whether he could have risked the moral impression which would have been made on the assembly by his failure to meet Hananiah's action with any reaffirmation of the message with which he had been charged. To strike out the clause may seem a violent cutting of the knot, all the more that its very difficulty may be urged in favour of its authenticity. But, as Cornill points out, it may have grown out of the words 'Go and tell Hananiah' in 13, since the command appeared to imply that he had left the presence of his antagonist. The verb 'to go,' however, is frequently used in this book to introduce a message with which the prophet is entrusted, and it seems to have become a mere formula, having lost its proper significance (cf. especially xxxix. 16). Accordingly we should not press it here to imply

way. Then the word of the LORD came unto Jere- 12
miah, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the
bar from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying,
Go, and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD: 13
Thou hast broken the bars of wood; but thou shalt make
in their stead bars of iron. For thus saith the LORD of 14
hosts, the God of Israel: I have put a yoke of iron upon
the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him:
and I have given him the beasts of the field also. Then 15
said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet,
Hear now, Hananiah; the LORD hath not sent thee;
but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore 16
thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will send thee away from
off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because
thou hast spoken rebellion against the LORD. So Hana- 17
niah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

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that the two prophets had been parted. And 12 reads strangely if they had been.

13. If the policy of Hananiah was followed, they would be chastised with scorpions instead of with whips: cf. Amos v. 19. The yoke of Babylon would be fastened again on their neck, but a yoke far heavier and more galling, and one which no strength of theirs could break.

thou shalt make. We should probably read, with the LXX, 'I will make:' cf. 14, 'I have put a yoke of iron.' It is hardly appropriate to represent Hananiah as making the iron bars, since Jeremiah had made the wooden bars at God's command.

14. the beasts of the field: see note on xxvii. 6.

16. I will send thee away. As Hitzig points out, the phrase is chosen with reference to 'Yahweh hath not sent thee' in 15.

because . . . the LORD. This clause is omitted in the LXX. It is a quotation from Deut. xiii. 5. It is appropriate here in so far as the passage in Deuteronomy is directed against false prophets, inappropriate since the 'defection' there denounced is an incitement to idolatry.

17. The fact of Hananiah's death, told with such impressive brevity, without comment or elaboration, is to be accepted as historical; so that while his prediction that within two years

29 Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah

Babylon's yoke should be broken was discredited, Jeremiah's prediction that within that year Hananiah should die was verified in less than three months. The LXX is briefer still, 'And he died in the seventh month.' The swift fulfilment may have done something to enhance the respect paid to Jeremiah's advice, and take the heart out of the fanatics who were screaming for a vigorous foreign policy. Cheyne says: 'This might be a case of second sight. Cf. St. Adamnan's account of a prophecy of St. Columba that a certain boy would die at the end of the week' (*The Two Religions of Israel*, p. 58). He had treated the narrative more sceptically in his *Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah*, p. 77.

xxix. JEREMIAH COUNSELS THE EXILES TO SETTLE DOWN IN BABYLON, SINCE THERE IS NO HOPE OF SPEEDY RELEASE.

The links which connect this chapter with the two preceding have been already indicated in the Introduction to xxvii–xxix (see pp. 38, 39). Schmidt regards the correspondence with Babylon as 'scarcely historical' (*Enc. Bib.* 2387); and Cheyne considers the central statement of the chapter that the Babylonian oppression shall last only for a time to be certainly unauthentic (*Enc. Bib.* 3879); but recent commentators have for the most part recognized a very substantial historical element in the chapter, which in its original form was probably included in Baruch's biography of Jeremiah. The detailed references to persons and events can hardly rest on imagination, and the situation to which the letter is addressed is entirely natural with a people whose theological beliefs would predispose them to anticipate that the exile would prove a very temporary episode in their history. Equally convinced with Jeremiah (xxiv) of their superiority to the rotten remnant left behind in Jerusalem, they could not, without a complete inversion of their settled convictions, have thought of their own exile as permanent while Jerusalem continued to stand. And since they could not bring themselves to believe in the destruction of Yahweh's city, the downfall of the State, and the captivity of the people, they naturally anticipated a speedy return to Palestine, and were encouraged by their prophets in this cherished delusion. That Jeremiah, while opposing this expectation among those who were left behind, sought also to disabuse the exiles, is only natural, especially in view of his more friendly esteem for them. The date of the letter is not clear. But we may assume that it was sent quite early in Zedekiah's reign, probably in 596 or 595 B. C., when the exiles had been only a short time in their new home. It was not, we may assume, sent in 594 B. C., since in that year Zedekiah, instead of sending messengers to Babylon, the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders of the captivity, and to the priests, and to the

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paid a personal visit to that city (li. 59). Accordingly we must place the incidents of this chapter at a somewhat earlier period than those of xxvii–xxviii. On the expansion the original form has undergone see the notes.

xxix. 1–9. This is the letter sent by Jeremiah, by the hand of Zedekiah's messengers, to those taken to Babylon with Jeconiah. Yahweh bids you settle down in your own homes, marry and rear families, and seek the peace of Babylon, for it is your own peace. And do not be deceived by your prophets, who lie to you in My Name.

10–14. For after seventy years I will bring you back, since I entertain thoughts of good for you. You will pray and I will hear, you will seek Me with all your heart and find Me, and I will gather you from all the nations of your dispersion.

16–19. For on those who are left behind in Jerusalem I am sending sword, famine, and pestilence, and will make them like uneatable figs. They shall be an execration among all the nations of their dispersion, because they have not listened to My words.

20, 15, 21–23. And listen, you that are exiles. Because you say Yahweh has raised up prophets for us in Babylon, I will give Ahab and Zedekiah the false prophets into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, and he shall slay them by a death which shall become a proverb among you; for they have committed adultery and spoken lies in My Name.

24–32. Shemaiah has sent to Jerusalem, remonstrating with Zephaniah the overseer of the Temple for his remissness in not punishing Jeremiah for his letter to the exiles bidding them, in view of the long captivity before them, settle down in Babylon. Zephaniah reads the letter to Jeremiah, who predicts that Shemaiah for his false prophecies shall have no man to dwell among this people, and shall not see the good which Yahweh will do to it.

xxix. 1. the residue of the elders. This has occasioned much discussion. The LXX reads simply 'the elders,' and this is adopted by Giesebrecht and Rothstein. It is, however, as Duhm and Cornill urge, much easier to understand the omission than the insertion of the word rendered 'the residue of.' Several explanations have been offered. Some think that the residue is mentioned, since some might have died on the journey or since their arrival in Babylonia. But the term 'residue' suggests a depletion of their numbers greater than is at all likely from such a cause in so short a period; moreover, the gaps made by death would have been filled up. And even had some of the elders died, it would have been quite irrelevant for the writer to take account

prophets, and to all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon:
2 (after that Jeconiah the king, and the queen-mother, and the eunuchs, *and* the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, were departed from Jeru-
3 salem;) by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and

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of this in the choice of his expression. Hitzig explains that the phrase means the elders who are not also priests or prophets, but the author does not say the priests and prophets and the rest of the elders, because there would be priests and prophets who were not elders. But this explanation, though approved by Graf, can hardly be accepted. If the normal order had been felt to give an incorrect suggestion, then the sentence would have been cast in a different form rather than the order inverted in this unnatural way. Duhm thinks that there may have been an attempt at escape or opposition to regulations, which had cost some of the elders their liberty or their lives. Baruch might have given an account of this, or he might have presupposed it as well known. This is possible, but Jeremiah would probably have alluded to it in his letter; it would have served admirably to enforce his exhortation. The choice seems to lie between the omission of the word, with the LXX, and the suggestion made by Duhm, which is accepted by Cornill. The elders seem to have had a good deal of authority entrusted to them by the Babylonians; they are prominent in Ezekiel. Duhm omits the reference to the priests and prophets, and 15 does not favour the view that the prophets were explicitly addressed. We should probably omit, with the LXX, the relative sentence 'whom . . . Babylon,' and, if so, perhaps also the words 'and to all the people.'

2. This is struck out by Cornill and others. It breaks the connexion between 1 and 3, and is largely taken from xxiv. 1^{b}, 2 Kings xxiv. 12-16. Giesebrecht retains the reference to the deportation of Jeconiah to Babylon, but regards 'and the queen-mother . . . the smiths' as an expansion based on the passages mentioned. This is better than the elimination of the whole verse, since the note of time is not superfluous.

the queen-mother: see notes on xiii. 18, 19, xxii. 25 f.

smiths: see note on xxiv. 1.

3. The object of this diplomatic mission is unknown; perhaps it was in charge of the yearly tribute. Elasah was apparently the brother of Ahikam, mentioned as Jeremiah's protector in xxvi. 24 (see note), and of the Gemariah in whose chamber Baruch read the roll (xxxvi. 10), and who interceded with Jehoiakim not to

Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of
Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of
Babylon,) saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God 4
of Israel, unto all the captivity, whom I have caused to
be carried away captive from Jerusalem unto Babylon:
Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, 5
and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and beget sons 6
and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give
your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and
daughters; and multiply ye there, and be not diminished.
And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused 7

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burn it (xxxvi. 25). From the fact that he took Jeremiah's letter we may infer that, like his brothers, he was friendly to the prophet. Of Gemariah the son of Hilkiah (of course to be distinguished from his namesake the son of Shaphan) we know nothing further. He was not, we may take it for granted, Jeremiah's brother, but may have been the son of the chief priest of the Temple.

5. Jeremiah dissuades the exiles from regarding their stay in Babylonia as just a passing experience. They must make up their minds to a long period of captivity. They must look on Babylon as their home, build houses and plant gardens, renouncing the pleasing delusion that they would soon be restored to their old homes in Jerusalem.

6. This verse seems to presuppose that just as some refused to build and plant in this interim condition, so they refused to marry. The refusal would rest on different grounds; houses and gardens involved labour and expense, which would be largely wasted if they left Babylon. Wives and children they could take back with them, but young children would add greatly to the difficulties of the journey. Cornill thinks that a considerable proportion of the exiles would be young, unmarried men, and that there would not be Jewish wives for them in at all adequate numbers. He suggests that Jeremiah may have meant that instead of remaining unmarried in the hope of speedy return home, they should marry Gentile women.

that . . . daughters: omitted in LXX.

7. The hearts of the exiles would naturally be hot with hatred for the oppressor, and if they prayed with reference to him, it would be for his downfall. But Jeremiah bids them acquire houses and gardens, that they may forge links which will bind them to the new land, and make its interest identical with their

you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the LORD
8 for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. For
thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Let not
your prophets that be in the midst of you, and your
diviners, deceive you, neither hearken ye to your dreams
9 which ye [a] cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy
falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them,
10 saith the LORD. For thus saith the LORD, After seventy

[a] †Or, *dream*

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own. They are to pray for its peace; it is true the injunction is recommended by a self-regarding motive, but it was inspired by wise regard for their welfare, and altruistic appeals would have been wasted on such an audience.

the city. If the text is correct, the term probably indicates no one city, such as Babylon, but the city in which you may happen to be. The exiles would not be concentrated in one place. But we should probably read 'the land.'

8, 9. Duhm regards these verses as an insertion, because no account is given of what the false prophets said, and because it is not mentioned till 15 that the exiles believed that they had prophets among them. The former reason is unimportant; what all knew there was no need to repeat, and the context makes it plain. The latter reason, which has decided Cornill to follow Duhm, has more substance. But it is not at all decisive; 8, 9 contain a warning against their prophets in general; 15 introduces, in its true connexion, a threat against two prophets.

ye cause to be dreamed. The causative conjugation of this verb occurs nowhere else, and the thought itself is somewhat strange. If the text is correct, the meaning is apparently that the people consulted the prophets and set them dreaming that they might be able to give them an oracle. It is possible that the conjugation is used in the simple sense 'ye dream.' It would be better, however, to secure this sense, which is given by the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate, by striking out the initial letter of the verb as due to mistaken repetition of the final letter of the pronoun. It would perhaps be better still to read 'they dream' (as Cornill); it is not the people generally who go to the prophets to have their dreams interpreted, but, as xxiii. 25–28 shows, the prophets who give lying oracles on the basis of their dreams. If so, we should also, of course, read 'their dreams.'

10. This verse ought not to be omitted; it is most appropriate that Jeremiah's counsel should be driven home by the reminder years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that 11 I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you [a] hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto 12 me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, 13 and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD, and 14 I will [b] turn again your captivity, and I will gather you

[a] Heb. *a latter end and hope.* [b] Or, *return to*

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that the Babylonian dominion will last seventy years, and only when this period is accomplished will the exile be brought to an end. On the 'seventy years' see note on xxv. 11.

11. I know. The pronoun is emphatic, similarly 'I think.' Several scholars take the meaning to be, The prophets are ignorant but I know. But probably this is not the contrast intended. The point is rather that although the long delay may give the impression that Yahweh's attitude to Judah is one of settled hostility, He has from the very beginning of her misfortune entertained purposes of granting her a future and a hope, i. e. a future full of hope. The people will say 'From Yahweh my way is hid' (Isa. xl. 27); but His wrath does not hide from Him His ultimate goal of mercy, He keeps it steadily in view all the time.

12-14. The LXX has a much shorter text. In 12 it reads 'And pray unto me and I will hearken unto you.' In 14 it omits everything after the first clause, 'And I will be found of you.' In the latter point it is plainly superior; the exiles addressed were in Babylonia, not dispersed among the nations, and the verse is composed of stock phrases. It is not so clear that the omission in 12 is original; the text, however, can hardly be correct: 'and ye shall go' yields no satisfactory sense and spoils the parallelism. Several suggestions have been made; the sense required is, 'And ye shall call upon me, and I will hear you;' i. e. though you are banished from My land and My sanctuary, I still hear the cry from your distant home.

14. I will be found of you: LXX reads 'I will appear to you:' cf. xxxi. 3. If this is part of the letter, the LXX is to be preferred, since 'find' occurs in 13.

turn again your captivity. The original sense of this expression is still much disputed; since Ewald first proposed it, many

from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be
15 carried away captive. For ye have said, The LORD hath

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have held the view that it meant originally 'to reverse the fortunes of,' a sense which it bears in Job xlii. 10 and apparently in Ezek. xvi. 53 ('of Sodom and her daughters'). In most cases, however, the rendering in R.V. is applicable, and may well represent the original meaning. See Driver's note on Deut. xxx. 3, with the supplementary note in the *Addenda*.

15–20. These verses create serious difficulties. Verse 15 connects with nothing in the preceding context but 8, 9, nor in what follows till we reach 21. Moreover in the LXX (except in Lucian's recension) 16–20 is omitted. This in itself suggests at least that 15 should stand immediately before 21, as it does in the LXX and also in Lucian's recension where it comes after 16–20. The question as to the originality of 16–20 is somewhat more difficult, but the weight of evidence is strongly in favour of its exclusion from the text. The omission in the LXX might be accounted for by the passing of the scribe's eye from 'Babylon' in 15 to 'Babylon' in 20, or assuming that 15 stood before 21, from 'For' in 16 to 'For' in 15. It is also true that the connexion of 15 with 13 is not easy. It is difficult to see why a post-exilic editor should have inserted the passage, the distinction between the Jews in exile with Jehoiachin and those in Jerusalem with Zedekiah having lost all significance with the destruction of the Jewish State. The inclusion of the verses in Lucian's recension also favours their authenticity. On the other hand, the passage has little relevance in this context; why should Jeremiah break off from his counsel to the exiles and deal with the situation in Jerusalem? Why should he say that Yahweh will make those left in Jerusalem 'like vile figs,' which implies that xxiv was known to the readers; and yet with a change in the application, the figure referring in xxiv to character, here to destiny? In 18, moreover, the writer forgets his assumed situation before the fall of Jerusalem, and speaks of the dispersion as already accomplished; similarly in 19, 'Ye would not hear,' if the text is correct, can hardly be addressed to the first group of exiles as a reason for the dispersion which had overtaken the Jews left behind with Zedekiah. Some of these difficulties are removed by the omission of 17^b (from 'I will make')–19, and Giesebrecht considers that the rest of the passage ought to be regarded as an authentic part of the letter. But this excision is itself a rather arbitrary critical operation, and destroys the link of contrast between 19 and 20, 'ye would not hear . . . Hear ye therefore.'

raised us up prophets in Babylon. [S] For thus saith 16
the LORD concerning the king that sitteth upon the
throne of David, and concerning all the people that
dwell in this city, your brethren that are not gone forth
with you into captivity; thus saith the LORD of hosts: 17
Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine,
and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs,
that cannot be eaten, they are so bad. And I will 18

It is also questionable whether, if the verses are retained even in this modified form, the transposition of 15 to follow 20 and precede 21 can be justified. It is not improbably a rearrangement due to Lucian himself. But if 15 immediately followed 13 (or 14 if that be authentic), the conclusion is inevitable that 16–20 is no part of the original text, and that Lucian's inclusion of it does not represent the true LXX. It is a late insertion based on earlier passages in the book, especially xxiv. 8–10, and crowded with characteristic expressions. Why a later writer should have inserted it is not clear; possibly it reflects a post-exilic estimate of the relative merits of the Jews in Babylon and those in the dispersion, together with 'the people of the land' in Palestine. But this is on the whole improbable, and we must content ourselves with the melancholy reflection that a reader thought the insertion of Jeremiah's unfavourable judgement on the Jews in Jerusalem would improve and complete the prophet's letter to the exiles in Babylonia.

15. For. Since this verse is to be connected with 21, we should probably render 'Because.' The exiles congratulated themselves that though they had been banished from Yahweh's land, His power extended even to Babylon, and there He raised up prophets to announce that He would soon break the Babylonian yoke. Ezekiel, who was quite one with Jeremiah in his judgement of the situation, did not receive his call till a few years later. Jeremiah warns his readers that they will be able to estimate the value to be attached to the message of these prophets by the fate which is soon to overtake them, and learn how premature their rejoicing had been.

16. the king: i.e. Zedekiah.

17. The former part of the verse is taken from xxiv. 10, the latter from xxiv. 8. The word rendered 'vile' is much stronger than the corresponding word in xxiv; it is derived from the same root as the word rendered 'a horrible thing' in v. 30.

18. The former part of the verse is largely a repetition of 17. The latter part is based on xxiv. 9 (cf. also xv. 4 with the note). The details are varied from xxiv. 9; in particular 'I shall drive'

pursue after them with the sword, with the famine, and
with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be [a] tossed
to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, to be an
execration, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a
reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven
19 them: because they have not hearkened to my words,
saith the LORD, wherewith I sent unto them my servants
the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye
20 would not hear, saith the LORD. Hear ye therefore the
word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have
sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 [B] Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,

[a] †Or, *a terror unto*

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becomes 'I have driven,' and the tense ought not to be assimilated to that in xxiv. 9, the interpolator betrays himself by it.

19. Cf. vii. 25, 26, xi. 7, 8, xxv. 4.

ye would not hear. Perhaps we should read 'they would not hear,' but it is more likely that the interpolator has here again forgotten his assumed standpoint.

20. This verse is designed as a link to connect the interpolated verses with the oracle that follows.

all ye . . . Babylon: cf. xxiv. 5.

21. This verse completes the sentence begun in 15. We know nothing of Ahab and Zedekiah beyond what we learn from these passages. The LXX omits the names of their fathers, but we may be sure that these names are not inventions of a scribe. The execution of these prophets would be a punishment for treasonable utterances, such as the proclamation of the approaching downfall of Babylon and liberation of the Jews. The reference to the mode of death may possibly have been added to bring the prediction into more explicit conformity with the event which doubtless ensued as described in 22. But it may be an original part of the letter. It is true that there is a play on the name Kolaiah in the word rendered 'roasted' (as there is also in the word for 'curse'). But we have no valid reason for the inference that this gave rise to the story that they were put to death in this way; though this particular word was presumably chosen for the sake of the assonance, and we are probably to regard the word as equivalent to 'burn,' not necessarily to roast before a fire or bake in an oven. Jeremiah would be aware that such a punishment, almost unknown

concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay
them before your eyes; and of them shall be taken up 22
a curse by all the captives of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab,
whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire: because 23

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among the Hebrews (Gen. xxxviii. 24, Lev. xxi. 9), was in use among the Babylonians (cf. Dan. iii).

22. Then their names would still be on men's lips, no longer as prophets, but in a gruesome formula of imprecation used by exiles to fellow exiles. Cursing in the East, however, goes to much greater lengths in expression than is common in the West, and is not to be taken too seriously, even though the Divine Name is invoked for its fulfilment.

23. The fate of these two prophets is due to their immorality and their unjustifiable claim to speak as Yahweh's messengers (for the combination of the two in the prophets of Jerusalem see xxiii. 14). Obviously Nebuchadnezzar did not punish them with their horrible death for the second of these offences, and it is hardly probable that he did so for the former. Burning (i.e. probably burning alive, though many think the offender was stoned and then the corpse was burnt) is the penalty prescribed in the Law of Holiness for the unchastity of a priest's daughter (Lev. xxi. 9), and that pronounced on Tamar by Judah (Gen. xxxviii. 24) for the same offence. But in these cases 'the woman pays,' though in Lev. xx. 14 all the guilty parties are burnt for a particular type of incest; and while the death penalty is inflicted for adultery on both the guilty parties (Deut. xxii. 22, Lev. xx. 10), it was not by burning but by stoning (Ezek. xvi. 38, 40, xxiii. 45, 47, John viii. 5), and, as we learn from the passages in Ezekiel, by thrusting them through with swords to dispatch them. In the Code of Hammurabi burning is the penalty for a peculiarly flagrant form of incest (§ 157), but adulterers are strangled and cast into the water (§ 129). The Jews would have no power of inflicting death, but it is unlikely that they would take the case before the Babylonian courts, or that so ghastly a sentence would be pronounced. The offence for which Nebuchadnezzar roasted them must have been treason or possibly blasphemy against the gods of Babylon; but Yahweh punished them for the offences mentioned by delivering them into his hand (21).

they have wrought folly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken words in my name falsely, which I commanded them not; and I am he that knoweth, and am witness, saith the LORD.

24 [BS] And [a] concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite thou

[a] Or, *unto*

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wrought folly in Israel. This expression is commonly (though not exclusively : cf. Joshua vii. 15) applied to breaches of chastity (Gen. xxxiv. 7, Deut. xxii. 21, Judges xx. 6, 2 Sam. xiii. 12). Accordingly it seems here to have reference to the former of the two offences to be enumerated. The term 'folly' is not an adequate rendering of the Hebrew term ; both 'wisdom' and 'folly' had for the Hebrews a moral rather than an intellectual connotation ; and the term used here, as Driver says, 'denotes a state of mind, or an action, marked by utter disregard of moral or spiritual feeling.'

24–32. We now learn of an attempt by Shemaiah, one of the exiles, to have Jeremiah punished for his letter. The section is far from clear, and the LXX diverges considerably from the Hebrew. It is true that the LXX gives quite a perverted impression of the matter, since it turns the former part of Shemaiah's letter to Zephaniah (26) into an address to him by Jeremiah, and the rest (27, 28) into a remonstrance with both of them by Jeremiah for their abuse of him ; and crowns the confusion by saying, in harmony with the Hebrew text, that Zephaniah read the letter (which has not been previously mentioned) to Jeremiah ! Naturally this incoherent jumble cannot come into competition with the Hebrew text. But it would be too hasty to infer that it is without value for the restoration of the original. The present Hebrew text also is in some confusion. Jeremiah is told to deliver the following message from God to Shemaiah. The message, however, does not follow because the author goes on to assign the reason for it, namely, that Shemaiah has sent letters to Jerusalem, and then quotes his letter to Zephaniah at length, and concludes with the statement that Zephaniah read the letter to Jeremiah. Lastly we have the statement that then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, bidding him send a message about Shemaiah, not to Shemaiah himself, but to the exiles. As compared with the LXX the main points are quite clear in the Hebrew, and no one could be seriously misled as to the course of events. Nor is it incredible that Baruch was himself responsible for the inconsequent form of the passage. It would be better to accept

shalt speak, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the 25
God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thine
own name unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and
to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all
the priests, saying, The LORD hath made thee priest in 26
the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers

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a reconstruction of the text which would give us a narrative pure and simple. This involves striking out the command to Jeremiah that he should speak thus to Shemaiah. It would then be best to treat 'Concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite' as the title of the paragraph, and begin the narrative 'This man sent letters in his own name.' Or we could read 'Shemaiah the Nehelamite sent letters in his own name.'

Duhm, to whom the chief credit for this reconstruction belongs, thinks that Baruch said nothing as to the outcome of the letter, and that his narrative closed with the statement that Zephaniah read it to the prophet, 30-32 being an addition, imitative in character and inappropriate in content. But while the passage may have been expanded, it probably contains a genuine kernel. The story would, in fact, have closed very abruptly with 29.

24. Shemaiah the Nehelamite. Nothing is known of him beyond what we learn from this passage. It is uncertain whether 'the Nehelamite' designates him as member of a particular family, or as belonging to a particular place, which is otherwise unknown to us.

25. Shemaiah writes in his own name, not in the name of Yahweh. It is questionable whether the plural 'letters' is correct. The Syriac reads the singular, and only one letter is otherwise mentioned. The plural is used for a single letter, 2 Kings xix. 14, xx. 12. The LXX omits the word altogether. We should omit, with the LXX, 'unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and,' with 'and to all the priests,' since Zephaniah is addressed in the singular; and the duty, which Shemaiah remonstrates with him for disregarding, is his own duty, not that of the priests in general.

Zephaniah: see note on xxi. 1. He is said in lii. 24, 2 Kings xxv. 18 to have been 'the second priest,' i.e. second to Seraiah the chief priest. He was twice sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah to ask for an oracle: xxi. 1, xxxvii. 3. He was among those executed by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah after the capture of Jerusalem (lii. 24-27, 2 Kings xxv. 18-21).

26. in the stead of Jehoiada the priest. In themselves the words rather favour the view that Jehoiada was Zephaniah's immediate predecessor. If so, we know nothing further of him.

in the house of the LORD, for every man that is mad, and maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him 27 in the stocks and in [a] shackles. Now therefore, why hast

[a] †Or, *the collar*

It is, however, more probable that the reference is to the famous priest Jehoiada, who deposed Athaliah and set Joash on the throne. We read that he 'appointed officers over the house of Yahweh' (2 Kings xi. 18). Their function would be to preserve order, and prevent the services from being disturbed by noisy people who took themselves to be prophets. Of course discrimination had to be practised, since the conduct of a prophet whom Yahweh had truly sent might be externally indistinguishable from that of a deluded enthusiast. Pashhur, Zephaniah's predecessor, had exercised his disciplinary function in Jeremiah's case, having formed the same estimate of him as Shemaiah did now.

officers. The plural is difficult: some think it refers to Jehoiada and Zephaniah; others, including Graf, interpret 'Yahweh hath made thee priest, that officers may be in the house of Yahweh,' i. e. Zephaniah's position as priest carries with it the duty of appointing Temple officers. But we should simply substitute the singular with LXX, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate, 'that thou shouldest be an officer.' On the duties of the overseer cf. note on xx. 1. It would be precarious to assume that the duty here mentioned was all that Zephaniah had to perform, and infer that the number of those who had to be dealt with was large.

every man . . . prophet. Probably we are not to distinguish two classes here, those who are mad, and those who pose as prophets; the two clauses refer to the same person, and mean any one whose madness takes the form of making himself out to be a prophet. The early prophets had been distinguished by their eccentricities, their raving enthusiasm; they sometimes impressed people with the idea that they were mad (2 Kings ix. 11). When Saul was under the influence of the 'evil spirit from God,' i. e. some form of mental disorder, 'he prophesied' (R.V. margin 'raved') 'in the midst of the house' (1 Sam. xviii. 10). Cf. 1 Sam. x. 10-13, xix. 20-24. The great prophets from the eighth century onwards seem to have risen largely, if not completely, above these ecstatic states and eccentric habits, but probably the lower type of prophet still exhibited the old characteristics in no slight degree. If two classes are mentioned here, we must remember that the madman is often regarded by primitive peoples as divinely inspired.

in the stocks and in shackles. For 'the stocks' see note on xx. 2. The word rendered 'shackles' occurs here only, and its

thou not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh
himself a prophet to you, forasmuch as he hath sent unto 28
us in Babylon, saying, *The captivity* is long: build ye
houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat
the fruit of them? And Zephaniah the priest read this 29
letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet. Then came 30
the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Send to all 31
them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning
Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because that Shemaiah
hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and
he hath caused you to trust in a lie; therefore thus saith 32

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meaning is disputed. It is now generally taken, on the analogy of an Arabic word, to be an iron band fastened round the neck, so that the rendering in the margin, 'collar,' fairly represents the Hebrew.

28. As sufficient proof of Jeremiah's 'mad' condition, Shemaiah thinks it enough to quote his advice to the exiles to settle down in their new home, since the time was long ere the captivity should be ended. The sanity of the prophet was never more apparent than when he administered this cold douche of common sense to their fevered enthusiasm.

29. Zephaniah does not follow the example set by his predecessor (xx. 1-3), but communicates Shemaiah's letter to the prophet, which we may fairly take as a sign of sympathy with his standpoint.

31. It is objected to the narrative that it betrays no consciousness of any difficulty in sending the prophecy to Babylon. Probably the opportunities of communication were more numerous than we might anticipate. That when it reached Babylon it would circulate among the exiles may be inferred from what had happened to the previous letter.

prophesied. There is no previous indication in the story that Shemaiah was one of the prophets, and there is thus a suspicious parallel with the case of Pashhur (xx. 6). But there was no occasion for an earlier reference, and there is an antecedent probability that this antagonist of Jeremiah should, like Hananiah, belong to the ranks of the prophets.

32. It is strange that Jeremiah should include as an element in Shemaiah's punishment that he should not behold the good that Yahweh would do to His people. This seems to refer to the return from exile, but since Jeremiah did not expect this for the LORD, Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed; he shall not have a man to dwell among this people, neither shall he behold the good that I will do unto my people, saith the LORD: because he hath spoken rebellion against the LORD.

30 [S] The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD,

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seventy years, it would have been remarkable if Shemaiah had been alive at the time. The LXX reads 'there shall not be a man of them in the midst of you to see the good,' which is to be preferred since it gives an acceptable sense, that none of Shemaiah's descendants should see the restoration accomplished. The LXX omits the last clause, see xxviii. 16.

xxx, xxxi. THE GLORIOUS FUTURE OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

These chapters break the series of biographical sections. Originally we may suppose that they closed the collection of Jeremiah's prophecies which, before they were united with Baruch's memoirs, consisted of i–xxv, xlvi–li, xxx–xxxi. When the fusion of the prophecies with the memoirs took place, xxx, xxxi was presumably placed in its present position because xxix, with its references to the restoration (xxix. 10 ff., 32), seemed to form a suitable introduction to it.

This section has for a long time challenged the suspicious scrutiny of critics. Movers, impressed by the striking similarities between these chapters and the latter part of Isaiah, put forward the view that the chapters had been worked over by the Second Isaiah. This view was adopted by de Wette and Hitzig, but the three scholars differed widely in detail. In reply Graf admitted the similarity with Isa. xl–lxvi, but urged that this was accounted for by similarity of content, and that the striking coincidences in expression were to be explained as due to imitation of Jeremiah on the part of the Second Isaiah. He met Hitzig's accusation that the chapters were characterized by lack of connexion, with the counter-charge that this could properly be brought only against the prophecy as Hitzig had reconstructed it, and with the demonstration that the prophecy, as we have it, is a well-connected whole. The force of Graf's plea for the authenticity, combined with the divergence between those who impugned it and the unsatisfactoriness of their reconstructions, had the effect of rehabilitating the Jeremianic authorship in the eyes of critics, till Stade and Smend rejected it altogether. The grounds for this conclusion were not communicated by Stade in the footnote in which he saying, Thus speaketh the LORD, the God of Israel, saying, 2

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stated it (*Geschichte Israels*, i. 643), but Smend examined the question with some fullness in the first edition of his *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte.* He argued that these chapters did not even spring out of the exile, but presupposed the return which is not mentioned. Judah is in a miserable condition, the prophet looks forward to a speedy deliverance which is to come through the restoration of Ephraim and its reunion with Judah. It was true that Jeremiah had predicted the restoration of Ephraim (iii), but he had combined the restoration of Ephraim with the rejection of Judah, while the author of xxx, xxxi combined the expected return of Ephraim with the already accomplished return of Judah. Further, whereas Jeremiah expected the exile to last a long while, the author of xxx, xxxi anticipated a speedy restoration. Since the prophecy was written in Palestine (xxxi. 8, 21), but after the destruction of Jerusalem (xxx. 18, xxxi. 40), it can have been written by Jeremiah, if he was its author, only in the few months which elapsed between the fall of Jerusalem and his compulsory journey to Egypt. But a longer time seems to have elapsed, Judah's wound is seen to be incurable, the nations have abandoned her. The study of Smend's discussion convinced the present writer, before Giesebrecht's commentary came into his hands, that the insertion of a considerable non-Jeremianic element had to be admitted, but that there was no justification for the relegation of the whole to the post-exilic period, and in particular for the rejection of the prophecy of the New Covenant.

Smend's arguments were submitted to a careful examination by Giesebrecht in the first edition of his commentary. He drew a distinction between the two chapters. He gave up the Jeremianic origin of xxx entirely, having been convinced by Smend's arguments that 18–21 constituted no exception, a point on which he had previously hesitated. But in xxxi he recognized the authenticity of 2–6, 15–20, 27–34. The two former, which deal with the restoration of Ephraim, he assigned to Jeremiah's earliest period. Duhm largely agreed with Giesebrecht as to these passages, accepting xxxi. 2–6, 15–22^a. But he also retained xxx. 12–15 for Jeremiah. On the other hand he followed Smend in rejecting, though only after long hesitation and with much reluctance, Jeremiah's authorship of the New Covenant passage. Erbt accepted xxxi. 2–6, 15–17, 18–20. Cornill considered that the Jeremianic elements in the chapters were xxxi. 2–5, 9^b, 15–22^b, which belonged to the first period of the prophet's work, and xxxi. 31–34, the prophecy on the New Covenant spoken after the destruction of Jerusalem. Rothstein, on the contrary, is prepared to recognize a good part of the poetical passages in both chapters as Jeremianic.

Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in

This survey will have shown that there is considerable consensus of opinion among recent writers that little if any Jeremianic matter is to be found in xxx, but that the prophecy of Ephraim's restoration in xxxi is largely authentic. On the other hand there is still a sharp divergence of opinion on the most important of all the problems raised in connexion with the criticism of the book, the authorship of the great oracle on the New Covenant, xxxi. 31-34. The detailed discussion can most profitably be reserved for the notes. Here a few general observations on the two chapters may be offered. In view of the unity which pervades these chapters we should regard them as a single well-planned composition, which must belong in its present form to the post-exilic period. This date is established by the situation presupposed in it, and by its relations to II Isaiah. Had Jer. xxx, xxxi been used by the Second Isaiah, as Graf maintained, we should have expected him to draw on it throughout, but the points of contact are confined to certain portions. Accordingly we may infer that at least the sections which present close parallels with II Isaiah, and therefore the composition as a whole, is post-exilic. At the same time the probabilities that a genuine Jeremianic nucleus is present are considerable. The parallelism with Jer. iii is striking, and in particular the invitation to Ephraim to return. The compiler, however, felt that the prominence of Northern Israel threw Judah into the background, and this largely accounts for the additions which he made. On the prophecy of the New Covenant the reader must refer to the special discussion of the passage; here the present writer must simply register his unshaken conviction that though in its present form we may owe it to Baruch, the prophecy itself comes from Jeremiah and from no other, and is the worthy crown of his teaching, as he has sought to show in the Introduction to this work (vol. i, pp. 43-48).

The date at which xxx, xxxi was compiled is a matter for conjecture. Duhm believes that it contains very late elements. A far more moderate position is taken by Schmidt, who says that it falls between the prophecies collected in Isa. xl–lv, and those found in Isa. lvi–lxvi. He thinks that it was written on the eve of Xerxes' expedition against Greece. 'The gathering of tremendous armies from all lands for a decisive combat may well have struck terror into the hearts of Judaeans' (*Enc. Bib.* 2391).

xxx. 1-3. Yahweh bade Jeremiah write all He had spoken to him in a book, in view of the restoration of Israel and Judah.

4-11. Why is this consternation? Why do men display such anguish? It is the Great Day, a day of trouble for Jacob, which shall issue in his deliverance. His yoke shall be broken, no more shall a book. For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that 3

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he serve strangers, but Yahweh and David their king. Fear not, Jacob, the servant of Yahweh, for thou shalt be restored and rest in thy land. I will utterly destroy the nations of thy dispersion, but thee I will only chastise.

12–17. Zion's hurt is incurable, she is forsaken by her lovers; Yahweh has inflicted her wound to punish her for her sins. All her enemies shall suffer retribution for the injuries they have done to her; but she shall be healed, outcast though she has been called.

18–22. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, it will be filled with thanksgiving and merriment; its inhabitants will be multiplied, honoured, and protected. They shall be governed by a native ruler, whom I will cause to draw near to Me; they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

23, 24. Behold the storm of Yahweh's anger is about to burst on the wicked, nor will it cease till His purpose is fulfilled. The event will make plain the meaning of the threat.

xxxi. 1–6. Then I will be a God to all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. Those who survived the sword have found favour in exile; I will go to restore Israel. From afar Yahweh assures Israel of His undying love. I will re-establish thee, O virgin of Israel; thou shalt join in the merry dance, and plant vineyards on the slopes of Samaria. They will go up from Ephraim to Yahweh in Zion.

7–14. Rejoice for the salvation of Israel; a great company from the north country and the ends of the earth is led back by Me, who am once more Israel's father and count Ephraim as My firstborn. Let the nations hear of Israel's restoration. They shall rejoice in Zion and feast on Yahweh's bounty; all their desire shall be satisfied. Mourning shall be turned into merriment, and all shall be abundantly content.

15–22. The voice of Rachel is heard lamenting for the children she has lost. Cease thy tears: thy children shall come back to thee. Ephraim repents his former waywardness, and pleads with Yahweh to restore him. I yearn over him, even when I rebuke him; I will have mercy upon him. Return, Israel, to thy cities. Why go hither and thither? Yahweh has created a new thing: a woman will be turned into a man.

23–26. Again in Judah will Yahweh's blessing be invoked on the Temple; its inhabitants shall be husbandmen and shepherds. He has satiated the weary. I woke to reality from my slumber, and realized that it was all a pleasant dream.

27–30. I will give Israel and Judah the seed of man and beast, and as I have cast them down, so I will build them up. No longer shall the children complain that they are punished for their fathers' sins, but each shall suffer for his own.

I will [a] turn again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

4 And these are the words that the LORD spake concern-

[a] Or, *return to*

31–34. I will make a New Covenant with Israel and Judah, not like that which I made when I brought them out of Egypt, a covenant which they broke; but I will write My law in their hearts, I will be their God and they shall be My people. And none shall teach another the knowledge of Yahweh, for all shall know Me, and I will forgive and forget their sin.

35–37. If the laws which control the shining of the heavenly bodies are abolished, Israel also shall cease to be a nation before Me. If heaven can be measured and the foundations of the earth be searched out, I will cast off Israel for its sin.

38–40. Jerusalem shalt be rebuilt larger than before, and never again be destroyed.

xxx. 2. all the words. If this is taken strictly it would imply a direction to Jeremiah to compile a complete collection of his prophecies, and the revelation which as yet he had not given to the world. The question would then arise in what relation this stood to the collection of prophecies made in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (xxxvi. 2). The latter was not necessarily complete; it contained prophecies against Jerusalem (so LXX) and Judah and the nations, and these were prophecies of denunciation and judgement. But if in the present passage a complete collection is intended it would naturally include the collection already made, and the absence of any reference to that roll would be perplexing. But we should probably not press the phrase. From 3 we learn that the prophecies are to be collected in view of the return of Israel and Judah to Palestine, and from 4 that they are to be identified with what follows. We might then take 'all the words' to mean all contained in this section. But perhaps the meaning is that the prophecies previously published were of a threatening character and gave only a one-sided representation of his teaching: 'all the words' have not yet been written; only when the promises of the blessed future have been added will the collection be complete. It need hardly be added that 1–4 will not be earlier than the date at which xxx–xxxi was compiled.

3. turn again the captivity: see note on xxix. 14. The phrase occurs rather frequently in xxx–xxxiii.

4. The form of expression may be intended to suggest a con-

ing Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the 5
LORD: We have heard a voice of trembling, [a] of fear,
and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man 6
doth travail with child: wherefore do I see every man
with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and
all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is 7
great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of

[a] †Or, there is *fear, and no peace*

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trast with the collection of words spoken concerning the foreign nations.

5. thus saith the LORD. If these words are to be retained, we should take the rest of the verse as a quotation by Yahweh of the people's words, inserting 'Ye say' in the translation (so Driver), since it is inappropriate to represent Yahweh as saying 'We have heard.' But the words are apparently a thoughtless, and rather too characteristic, addition by some scribe. It is the people who are speaking. The Day of Yahweh has come; men cry out in the panic which has overtaken them.

6. The posture and the paleness would in a woman suggest the throes of childbirth; if men exhibit the same symptoms it is a sign of a bitter, if a different, anguish. Cf. Isa. xiii. 8, Nah. ii. 10, Joel ii. 6. The superfluous clause 'as a woman in travail' is best omitted, with the LXX.

7. that day: i. e. the Day of Yahweh. This was originally, as we may infer from Amos v. 18, an element in the popular theology of Israel, expressing the expectation of a great intervention on the part of Yahweh, when He would crush all her foes and place her in a position of unchallenged supremacy. Amos warned the people that it would be a day of disaster and judgement, not of triumph, and his transformation of the idea was accepted by his true successors, many of whom give lurid descriptions of it, the most elaborate being that of Zephaniah. The *Dies Irae* is its counterpart in mediaeval Christianity. In the later Hebrew prophecy, however, the idea of the Day as issuing in Israel's salvation came back, conformably to the rule that prophecy before the destruction of the State was predominantly prophecy of judgement, after it prophecy of restoration. But salvation is reached through tribulation, which in the later Jewish theology was referred to as 'the woes of the Messiah.' The most familiar example is to be found in the eschatological discourse in the Gospels (see Mark xiii. 7, 8, 17–20, 24).

so that none is like it. This is probably the meaning; it

8 Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. And it
shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts,
that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will
burst thy bands; and strangers shall no more serve them-
9 selves of him: but they shall serve the Lord their God,
and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.
10 Therefore fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the

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involves a slight change in the present pointing, which gives the sense 'whence is any like it?' See note on x. 6.

Jacob's trouble. Jacob is a favourite designation of the Israelitish people in II Isaiah, and some of the later writers.

8. The former part of the verse is largely taken from Isa. x. 27, with an addition from Jer. ii. 20. The harsh change from the third to the second person is probably due to the fact that the passage is a quotation, but whether the poet retained the second person of the quotation, or whether he conformed it to the context and wrote the third person (so LXX, except that it substitutes the plural for the singular), and our present Hebrew text originated from assimilation to Isa. x. 27 is uncertain. The present writer prefers the former view, since he considers it easier to believe that the LXX corrected the awkward Hebrew than that a scribe would create the incongruity under the influence of Isa. x. 27; all the more that the LXX itself is not quite satisfactory in that it reads the plural. The yoke is the heathen dominion. But while it is political servitude only, and not idolatry as well, which is intended, the combination Yahweh and David in the next verse suggests that behind the heathen empires stood the supernatural rulers, 'the host of the high ones on high' of Isa. xxiv. 21, the 'gods' of Ps. lviii. 1 (see margin), lxxxii. 1, 6, the 'princes' of the Book of Daniel. These are ultimately responsible for Israel's sufferings, since they are the supernatural powers, which really control the policy of the great empires.

serve themselves of him: i. e. employ him as their slave; see notes on xxv. 11, 14.

9. serve: here combines the religious with the political sense. David is the name for the ideal ruler of the Davidic line; cf. Hos. iii. 5, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, xxxvii. 24, 25. It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that the final clause does not mean that the long-deceased king David will be raised from the dead to reign over Israel; the same verb is used in xxiii. 5, 'I will raise unto David a righteous shoot' (see note).

10, 11. The two verses recur with some variation in xlvi. 27, 28. The LXX inserts them there, but omits them here. It must

LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with 11 thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee with judgement, and will in no wise [a] leave thee unpunished.

For thus saith the LORD, Thy hurt is incurable, and 12

[a] Or, *hold thee guiltless*

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be remembered, however, that the prophecies on the foreign nations precede the present chapters in the LXX, so that the omission here may be simply an example of the suppression of passages of which a translation has already been given. Scholars take the most opposite views of the original position. Cornill thinks it stood originally in xlvi (a non-Jeremianic addition); Giesebrecht that it is an integral part of the present prophecy; Driver that it is a detached fragment, added in both places by a compiler; Orelli that it is from the hand of Jeremiah, and owes its position in both places to him. The strongly marked Deutero-Isaianic colouring of 10 forbids us to regard it as Jeremiah's, but it might quite well be an original element of the present non-Jeremianic passage.

10. Jacob my servant. This designation is found elsewhere in this book only in the parallel passage xlvi. 27, 28, but it is very common in the Second Isaiah, one of whose leading thoughts it is that Israel is the Servant of Yahweh. The form in which the sentence opens is similarly characteristic of II Isaiah, so too 'fear thou not' and 'I am with thee.'

from afar. Probably the dispersion is intended.

and none shall make him afraid. 'The expression is used of sheep lying undisturbed upon their pastures' (Driver).

11. We could hardly believe that Jeremiah uttered this prophecy of the annihilation of the nations. For 'I will not make a full end' cf. iv. 27, v. 10, 18.

I will correct thee with judgement: see note on x. 24.

12–17. Duhm considers that in 12–15 we have a genuine poem by Jeremiah (similarly Kent). It is Jeremianic in rhythm and imagery, but this may be due to imitation, as several scholars suppose. The language depicts Judah's condition after the judge-

13 thy wound grievous. There is none to plead [a] thy
cause, [b] that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast
14 no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten
thee; they seek thee not: for I have wounded thee
with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of
a cruel one; for the [c] greatness of thine iniquity, be-
15 cause thy sins were increased. Why criest thou [d] for
thy hurt? thy pain is incurable: for the [c] greatness
of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased, I have

[a] †Or, *thy cause: for* thy *wound thou hast no medicines* nor *plaister* [b] Heb. *for closing up*, or, *pressing.* [c] Or, *multitude* [d] †Or, *for thy hurt, because thy pain is incurable?*

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ment has been executed, but if Jeremiah's the passage is probably pre-exilic rather than composed just after the destruction of Jerusalem. It is perhaps on the whole more likely that it is the work of a later writer.

12. Cf. xv. 18, where Jeremiah uses with reference to himself language similar to that here used, as the feminine pronouns show, with reference to Zion. Her desperate state seems now to be of long standing.

13. The sudden transition from the medical to the judicial metaphor is very harsh, and the text is accordingly suspicious. The R.V. gives the sense according to the accents, but this involves a mixture of the metaphors. The R.V. marg. avoids this, but if the text is retained it would be better to render with Driver, 'There is none to plead thy cause: [there are no] medicines for the sore; there is no plaister for thee.' It would be better still, with Duhm, to omit the first clause, which is apparently a gloss. The word rendered 'wound' in the margin means something bound up rather than 'pressing' or 'binding up,' so that 'wound' is the correct translation. For the last clause of the verse cf. xlvi. 11.

14. thy lovers: Zion's old heathen allies; cf. iv. 30.

The latter part of the verse ('for . . . increased') recurs in 15. It is probable that the repetition is due to accident; the words come better in 15, and should be struck out here.

15. The rendering in the text suggests that it is useless for Zion to lament, since her pain is incurable. The margin is preferable, though 'that' would be better than 'because.' Why should Zion complain of her hurt, that no remedy can assuage her pain or heal her wound? The fault is all her own; the gravity of her punishment is due recompense for the gravity of her crime. Rothstein takes 15, 16 to be an expansion.

done these things unto thee. Therefore all they that 16
devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries,
every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that
spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee
will I give for a prey. For I will restore [a] health unto 17
thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD;

[a] See ch. viii. 22.

16, 17. The connexion with the preceding is difficult, since the sinfulness of Zion is no reason for its restoration. It is questionable whether we can substitute 'nevertheless' for 'therefore,' and the thought, though Zion deserves all she has received I will nevertheless punish her oppressors, is not very attractive. Keeping the present text, it is best to take 'therefore' to mean 'because thy case is so desperate.' The words 'It is Zion' have by many been taken as a gloss, but it was too obvious that Zion was intended for the need of such a gloss to be felt. The LXX reads 'This is your quarry,' the Hebrew word for 'quarry' or 'spoil' being very similar to that for 'Zion.' If this is accepted we should probably correct 'your' into 'our,' the two being easily confused in Greek. Cornill, who proposes this emendation, then reverses the order of 16, 17. He thus gets rid of the difficulty caused by 'Therefore,' but instead of the equally unsuitable 'For' is forced to read 'I' (*anoki* instead of *ki*). He also prepares for 'they that devour thee' (Heb. 'eat thee') by the words of the enemy 'This is our quarry.' The reconstruction (which is accepted by Kent) gives a smooth and orderly text, but it is reached by rather drastic measures, and further involves the elimination of the words 'whom no man seeketh after,' which are unsuitable with 'This is our quarry.' It can hardly be accepted with any confidence.

16. devour. In ii. 3 the word is appropriate, because Israel has just been described as 'the first-fruits;' its use here, without any such explanation in the context, is not so easy to understand. If Cornill's transposition of 16 and 17 be rejected, we should probably see here a reminiscence of ii. 3: cf. x. 25.

shall go into captivity. The LXX reads 'shall eat their own flesh.' Cornill accepts this, referring to Isa. xlix. 26, 'And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh;' we might compare Isa. ix. 20. It is noteworthy that in the other clauses of the verse the verbs are repeated ('devour . . . devoured,' &c.), and we should have expected this clause to follow the same pattern.

17. restore health unto thee: rather 'bring up fresh flesh upon thee:' see note on viii. 22.

because they have called thee an outcast, *saying*, It is
18 Zion, whom no man [a] seeketh after. Thus saith the
LORD: Behold, I will [b] turn again the captivity of Jacob's
tents, and have compassion on his dwelling places; and
the city shall be builded upon her own [c] heap, and the
19 palace shall [d] remain after the manner thereof. And out
of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them
that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall
not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not
20 be small. Their children also shall be as aforetime, and
their congregation shall be established before me, and

[a] Or, *careth for* [b] Or, *return to* [c] Or, *mound* Heb. *tel.* [d] Or, *be inhabited*

Zion. For the LXX reading 'quarry' see above. Modern suggestions are 'a monument,' 'a desert,' 'miserable.'

18. turn again the captivity: see xxix. 14.

the city. This may be collective, meaning the cities of Judah (and similarly 'the palaces'); if a particular city is meant it will be Jerusalem. It is to be rebuilt on its *tel* or mound, i. e. on its old site.

remain after the manner thereof. The verb means to dwell, and may be rendered as in the margin, or 'be situated.' If the former, the phrase means that the palace will be inhabited as it was wont to be. If the latter, we must take the word rendered 'manner' (literally 'right') to be equivalent to 'its rightful place,' which forms a better parallel to 'her mound' than the R.V., which would have been expressed more naturally in rather different Hebrew.

19. When Yahweh turns again the captivity of Zion, their mouth will be filled with thanksgiving and merriment (Ps. cxxvi. 1, 2); and they will not have to mourn over a land depleted of its population (contrast Isa. xxvi. 18, rendering 'been born' for 'fallen'). They will no longer be a despised people (Isa. liii. 2, 3), but honoured among the nations.

20. The people will be as in the time of the nation's greatness and prosperity under David and Solomon.

congregation: a characteristic term of the Priestly Document in the Pentateuch. Its use is not probable in a pre-exilic writer, who would have regarded Israel as a State rather than just an ecclesiastical community.

I will punish all that oppress them. And their prince 21
shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from
the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near,
and he shall approach unto me: for who is he that [a] hath
had boldness to approach unto me? saith the LORD.
And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 22

[b] Behold, the tempest of the LORD, *even his* fury, is 23
gone forth, a [c] sweeping tempest: it shall burst upon the

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[a] Heb. *hath been surety for his heart.* [b] See ch. xxiii. 19, 20.
[c] Or, *gathering*

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21. They will be governed by a native ruler; the term 'king' is avoided. The contrast is with the government by foreign empires, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, possibly Greece. This ruler will stand in the most intimate relations with God, to whom indeed he will act as priest. Not, however, as earlier high-handed kings who took it on themselves to approach God. That no one would dare to do who truly understood what the approach of a sinful mortal to the holy God involved (Isa. vi. 5: cf. Luke v. 8). He will not take the dread function on himself (cf. Heb. v. 4), but God will graciously cause him to draw nigh. It is possible that priestly privilege and duty are not claimed here for the ruler, but the language has more point, if the prince is also the priest. It would be easiest to understand this ideal if the author was writing in the time of the Maccabean priest-kings, but it is not probable that the passage is so late.

22. Cf. xxiv. 7, xxxi. 33. This verse is absent from the LXX, and is probably an insertion, on account of the transition to the second person plural, and the anticipation of xxxi. 1.

23, 24. These verses occur, in a quite unsuitable context, in xxiii. 19, 20 (see notes on that passage). Here a prediction of judgement is more in keeping with the eschatological terror of the passage, and Duhm considers them to be in their original connexion. Others regard them as an insertion. 'The wicked,' according to the general use of the term, are not the heathen but ungodly Jews, and the verses mean that before the restoration (xxxi. 1) can take place, a sifting blast of judgement is to go through the people, destroying the wicked, and leaving only the righteous to form the new nation. But this thought is scarcely in harmony with the general drift of these chapters, so that the verses are probably an insertion.

sweeping. The sense of the Hebrew word is uncertain; if the text is correct, we may render 'sweeping' or 'roaring.' But

24 head of the wicked. The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall understand it.

31 At that time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the
2 families of Israel, and they shall be my people. [J] Thus

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we should probably substitute the very similar word found in the parallel passage, 'whirling' (xxiii. 19).

xxxi. 1. This verse forms a link between the two chapters, and should therefore be assigned to the author who composed the two chapters, on the basis of Jeremianic material. In the bright future Yahweh will be the God of all the Hebrew tribes, not of one section alone. The disruption created by the folly of Rehoboam will be repaired.

2-6. This section is now generally regarded as containing a poem by Jeremiah on the restoration of the northern tribes. It probably belongs to his earliest period, like the similar utterance in the third chapter.

2. The verse is difficult. The R.V. text takes us back to the Exodus, when Yahweh intervened to save His people. This is strongly recommended by the reference to the wilderness, which reminds us of Jeremiah's description of the love between Yahweh and His people in the period of the wandering (ii. 2, 3, 7) which culminated in His gracious bestowal of the land of Canaan wherein she might 'rest' (ii. 7: cf. Exod. xxxiii. 14; Deut. iii. 20, xii. 9, 10; Joshua xxii. 4). The contrast of tenses here and in 4 ff. also favours this reference to the past. More probably, however, we should take the meaning to be that Israel in its captivity has found favour and will be restored. This is the main subject of the poem, and while it is not uncommon for the restoration to be compared with the deliverance from Egypt, we should expect the transition to be made plain. The tense is prophetic, and we should render 'hath found,' i. e. will find. The 'wilderness' must then be taken as a figurative expression for the land of exile, which while literally inappropriate, is chosen partly with a backward glance at the wilderness wandering, but chiefly under the influence of Hosea's words: 'Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak to her heart' (Hos. ii. 14). It must be admitted that such a use of the term without express indication that the usual sense is not intended is rather strange. Erbt deletes it, but it would be better to emend the text. Cornill suggests the word rendered 'dungeon' in Isa. xlii. 7 (*masgēr* for *midbār*), which is there used as a metaphor for captivity.

saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword [a]found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, [b]when I went to cause him to rest. The LORD appeared [c]of old 3 unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore [d]with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. Again will I build thee, and thou shalt be built, O 4

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[a] Or, *have found . . . when I go* [b] †Or, *when he went to find him rest* [c] †Or, *from afar* [d] Or, *have I continued lovingkindness unto thee*

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left of the sword. This expression cannot easily be reconciled with a reference to the Exodus, but it accurately describes what happened in connexion with exile, since the captives were the survivors of a nation decimated by war or by executions.

Israel: i. e., as the sequel shows, the Northern Kingdom. Duhm connects the word, which is in the Hebrew the last word of 2, with 3, changing it into 'God will regard' (*yashur 'el*), which gives a parallelism with 'Yahweh appears.'

when I . . . rest. It would be better to make Israel the subject as in the margin, 'when he went to find him rest.'

3. Israel is the speaker, but it would be better to read, with the LXX, 'unto him.'

of old. The marginal rendering 'from afar' should have been adopted in the text here, as in xxx. 10, li. 50, 'remember Yahweh from afar,' and 'hath appeared' should be substituted for 'appeared.' Yahweh from His distant home in Palestine (li. 50) appears to His people, languishing in exile, as their deliverer. Rothstein reads 'He that hath compassion on him' (*m^eraḥămo*), and omits 'the LORD.'

with lovingkindness . . . thee. The margin gives the same sense to the verb as in Ps. xxxvi. 10 ('continue thy lovingkindness:' cf. Ps. cix. 12, R.V. marg.). The thought is quite appropriate; the unchanging God, in spite of all Israel's unfaithfulness and the severity with which He has treated her, still cherishes His ancient love. The rendering in the text should probably be preferred; the influence of Hosea on this congenial spirit was deep, and we should interpret this passage in the light of Hos. xi. 4, 'I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.' It would be better to substitute 'I draw thee' for 'have I drawn thee.' His arms of love, which once clasped Ephraim, upheld and guided his first tottering steps (Hos. xi. 3), now reach out to draw him back from the 'far country' to his Father's house.

4. Once again Israel will be firmly established in her own land, and renew her ancient life of peaceful toil relieved by innocent virgin of Israel: again shalt thou be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that

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mirth and festivity. This idyllic picture deserves to be made prominent in any estimate of Jeremiah; it is one of many indications that he was no sour and morose enemy of recreation and merriment. Cornill justly emphasizes the significance of the fact that he should mention first in his description of the consequences of the restoration, not lofty spiritual blessings, but tabrets and dances.

shalt thou . . . tabrets. Israel is here addressed under the figure of a maiden, who on a festal occasion decks herself with tabrets. It is the whole people which is thus to be as light-hearted and enter as fully into the merry-making as a young maiden would. No doubt the actual dancing and timbrel-playing on the part of the virgins would constitute one of the most characteristic forms of this festivity. Jeremiah, in spite of his exclusion from it, had doubtless often felt the sympathetic thrill as he watched the happy scene. The word rendered 'tabret' is in several cases rendered 'timbrel.' It consisted of a wooden or metal ring, over which a skin was tightly stretched. It was a kind of hand-drum or tambourine, used specially by women, who held it in one hand and played on it with the fingers of the other. Miriam led the women with her timbrel, and they followed her with timbrels and dances, to celebrate the overthrow of Pharaoh's army (Exod. xv. 20, 21); and Jephthah was welcomed by his ill-fated daughter, his only child, 'with timbrels and with dances,' when he returned from his victory over the Ammonites (Judges xi. 34).

the dances of them that make merry. These would be celebrated especially at the harvest and vintage, and the maidens were prominent in them, as we see from the story of the marriage by capture of the daughters of Shiloh (Judges xxi. 19–21: cf. ix. 27). Dancing has become so completely secularized, to say the least, in modern life that it requires an effort of imagination to realize to what extent it has been a religious exercise. It has been so practised in many ages and by many peoples. Among the Hebrews the most conspicuous example is that of David, who when the ark was brought into his city, 'danced before Yahweh with all his might' (2 Sam. vi. 14), and met Michal's prudish censure of his indecorous enthusiasm with the reply, 'I will be yet more vile.' Such glowing religion the conventional are apt to despise, and a frigid morality has no insight to comprehend it. On the place of dancing in the religion of the post-exilic period the essay by Franz Delitzsch, 'Dancing and the Criticism of the Pentateuch in Relation to One Another' (*Iris*, pp. 189–204), will be found of interest.

make merry. Again shalt thou plant vineyards upon the 5
mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall

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5. This verse presupposes that the vineyards of Samaria had been destroyed. To replant them implies that the owners were confident in the security of their tenure. For while corn may be sown and reaped within a few months, several years have to pass before the vineyard (and still more the oliveyard) makes any return. No one would be willing to invest his labour and risk his money in planting vineyards, unless there was a reasonable prospect that no foe would be likely to ravage it. It does not necessarily mean that in war the vineyards would inevitably be destroyed by the invaders; unless hostilities were pushed to an extreme they and the oliveyards were usually spared. But their destruction was frequently effected in warfare. (See Ramsay, *Pauline and Other Studies*, pp. 232-41.) Hence the promise that every man should sit under his own vine and fig-tree, was tantamount to the assurance that the country would enjoy peace, and its inhabitants an undisturbed possession. 'The mountains of Samaria' (Amos iii. 9) are those of the kingdom generally, not simply of the capital, which of course had its fruitful vineyards (Isa. xxviii. 1). Vineyards were planted in terraces on the mountain slopes (cf. Isa. v. 1, 'my well-beloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill') for the sake of the sunny exposure, and because the soil was more favourable. In his essay 'The Bible and Wine' (*Iris*, pp. 171-85), Delitzsch says: 'The experiments of recent times confirm the fact, that while the sandy soil of the coast yields more, the chalky soil of the highlands yields better wine' (p. 174). The mention of Samaria attests the Jeremianic origin of the poem; a post-exilic writer would hardly have spoken thus of Jerusalem's hated rival.

the planters . . thereof. The text is uncertain, but the R.V. probably gives the general sense. The margin justifies the rendering 'enjoy' by its references. According to Lev. xix. 23-25 the fruit was treated as 'uncircumcised,' and therefore not to be eaten for the first three years. In the fourth year it was 'holy for giving praise unto Yahweh.' In the fifth year it could be eaten. It was, in other words, at first taboo, unfit for God, withheld from man. The ceremonial offering to Yahweh in the fourth year removed its 'uncircumcision,' and rendered it fit for profane or common use in the fifth year; just as the crops could not be eaten till the firstfruits had been offered. Instead of 'enjoy the LXX read 'praise.' The two verbs are almost identical in Hebrew. The problem raised by the variation is not quite simple, but since it is probable on metrical grounds that some words have fallen out, it seems best to conclude that the original text had

6 [a] enjoy *the fruit thereof.* For there shall be a day, that

[a] Heb. *profane*, or, *make common*. See Lev. xix. 23-25 ; Deut. xx. 6, xxviii. 30.

'and praise Yahweh' at the end of the verse, and that the Hebrew retained one of the two very similar verbs, the LXX the other. This was perhaps facilitated by the previous omission of one verb in the text from which both our texts are drawn, the word retained being diversely read.

6. This verse is closely connected with the preceding, and formally appears to be an integral part of the poem ; Duhm and Giesebrecht regard it as such, but Cornill thinks it must be a later addition, and Kent apparently inclines to adopt his opinion. Cornill cannot harmonize the view, which seems to underlie the passage, that Yahweh dwells on Zion and is only there to be sought and found, with the teaching of a prophet who places religion wholly in the heart and reins of men, and says of the Temple that, unless the people mend their ways, it will share the fate of Shiloh. And while the ancient schism between north and south would doubtless give place to a complete reunion, it is precarious to regard this as essentially ecclesiastical. These objections are not without weight ; in particular the suggestion that to find Yahweh the Ephraimites must go to Zion is not easy to reconcile with the detachment of religion from material conditions. Yet we should probably regard the verse as authentic. While religion was for the prophet a personal relation with a personal God, it is very hard to believe that he expected it to dispense with external expression ; and if it became individual it did not cease to be communal. Christianity is also in its essence a delocalized, dematerialized religion ; 'neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father,' an utterance more drastic than any from the lips of Jeremiah, more irreconcilable if taken literally with the recognition of any place of worship. It proclaims that God is Spirit, and demands a corresponding worship in spirit and truth. Yet for all its inwardness, it always seeks an outward expression ; and though such expression has constantly withdrawn the vital force from the secret centre to the surface, that is the fatal exaggeration of an intrinsic quality. Similarly we may hold that while Jeremiah looked forward to a deep spiritual experience for each member of the reunited nation, which should make each independent of all his fellows for the personal knowledge of God and communion with Him, he also anticipated that this would not be buried in the individual heart, but would rather seek expression in congenial forms. Indeed, the community of experience would inevitably involve community of worship. But it may still be asked, Would Jeremiah have singled out Zion and spoken as if

the watchmen upon the hills of Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God. [S] For thus saith the LORD, Sing with gladness for Jacob, 7
and shout [a] for the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise

[a] †Or, *at the head*

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there alone God and His people could meet? Would he not rather have said that they would go to their own local sanctuary for their service of thanksgiving? In a regenerated Israel the worship at the high places might be resumed, for the old abuses would have disappeared. And we may well believe that Jeremiah would have favoured this renewal. But this would not have met all the need he felt. If the feud between Judah and Ephraim had been healed, the new national consciousness demanded, in a people for whom the national and the religious were so closely united, a religious expression. The long-sundered tribes must express their spiritual as well as their political unity. And this would most naturally take the form of a religious reunion at Jerusalem, the capital of the undivided kingdom. Not that God dwelt only in Zion or could be found there alone. Those who spoke as in this verse could equally well have said, Let us go to the sanctuary of our own city to Yahweh our God. And it is a fine feature in the description that the Ephraimites should spontaneously resolve to celebrate their happy fortune in Jerusalem.

watchmen. The word is often explained as a designation of those who were set on the hills to watch for the appearance of the new moon. But the word seems to be used simply in the sense 'to guard,' so that the meaning is rather the keepers of the vineyards or orchards. This gives a good sense, but a slight correction (*bōts^{e}rim* for *nots^{e}rim*) would give the meaning 'grape gatherers,' which would suit the connexion even better.

7–14. These verses, with the possible exception of the last clause of 9, are probably to be assigned to the post-exilic author to whom we owe the composition of xxx, xxxi as a whole. The points of contact with the Second Isaiah are striking, and the deliverance is regarded as on the eve of accomplishment.

7. Sing . . . for Jacob. It is not clear to whom the command is addressed; the LXX reads 'the LORD saith to Jacob' (so Cornill). This may well be correct, though the Hebrew text is satisfactory enough.

for the chief of the nations. The margin is the more natural translation, but it is not free from objection, and we should probably accept with most recent scholars Duhm's emendation 'mountains' for 'nations' (*hārim* for *gōyīm*), 'shout on the top of the mountains;' the phrase is an imitation of the Second Isaiah's 'let them shout

ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of
8 Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth, *and* with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great

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from the top of the mountains' (Isa. xlii. 11), and was further occasioned by the mention of 'the mountains of Samaria' and 'the hills of Ephraim' in the preceding context.

O LORD, save thy people. We should read, with the LXX and Targum, 'The Lord has saved his people:' cf. Isa. xlviii. 20. There is no longer need to implore Yahweh to deliver them, the shout of joy implies that the deliverance is achieved; the Hebrew text has probably originated from the liturgical use of the word 'Hosanna' ('save now,' according to the usual interpretation, but see Cheyne's article 'Hosanna' in the *Enc. Bib.*).

8. I will bring: better 'I am bringing.' The Israelites return not simply from the north, but from the uttermost parts of the earth (for the combination cf. vi. 22); this suggests a much wider dispersion than in Jeremiah's time, but cf. Isa. xliii. 6.

the blind . . . together. The reference to the blind comes from Isa. xlii. 16, for that to the lame we may compare Isa. xxxv. 6. The latter passage occurs in a chapter which presents other parallels to our passage, but is itself a late imitative composition largely based on Isa. xl–lv. It is rather improbable that our author was acquainted with it. The latter part is suggested by Isa. xl. 11, but the application is different.

hither: i.e. to Palestine, in which the author was writing. Duhm points differently, reading the word for 'Behold' and connects it with the next verse, which thus opens as the present verse (so Rothstein).

9. They come with tears (l. 4) of penitence (as in the moving passage iii. 21, 'the weeping of the supplications of the children of Israel') and of joy. The LXX gives quite a different turn to the passage: 'They went forth with weeping, but with consolation will I bring them back,' i.e. they went into exile with sorrow, but I will bring them back with comfort. This yields an excellent sense, and may very well be correct. We have a similar contrast in Ps. cxxvi. 6, but Isa. liv. 7, 8 supplies a parallel to the sense of a more real if less formal kind. In any case it would be well to substitute 'consolations' for 'supplications.' The latter is not quite suitable to the situation, it has probably intruded into the passage under the influence of iii. 21, which, however, deals with the penitence that preceded the restoration (cf. also Zech. xii. 10). The LXX is supported by the great prominence given by the

company shall they return hither. They shall come with 9
weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will
[a] cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way
wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

[a] †Or, *bring them unto*

Second Isaiah to the comforting of Israel, cf. Isa. xl. 1, 2 (which strikes the keynote of Isa. xl–lv), xliii. 1 ff., xliv. 21–23, xlix. 13, 14 ff., li. 3, 12, lii. 9, liv. 10.

lead them: rightly connected with the preceding words. Hitzig and Graf preferred to connect with what follows, 'They shall come with weeping and with supplications: I will lead them, I will cause them to walk;' for a similar combination cf. Ps. xliii. 3. For 'lead' cf. Isa. xl. 11, xlviii. 21, xlix. 10, lv. 12; Ps. xxiii. 2.

rivers of waters: cf. Isa. xli. 18, xliii. 19, 20, xlviii. 21, xlix. 10. The way across the desert was, according to the Second Isaiah, to be relieved of all its peril from thirst and its discomforts, so that Yahweh might lead His people back in security and joy. The author of this passage, like the author of Isa. xxxv, writing with reference to the return from the dispersion, takes up the Second Isaiah's language, though with a less restricted application. Yahweh brings His people to the rivers, as the shepherd his sheep, so that they are not tormented with thirst.

a straight way. A better rendering would be 'an even way.' All the roughness of the road is to be smoothed out of it, so that there is nothing against which the weary or the careless should stumble: cf. Isa. xl. 4 (marg.), xlii. 16, also xlv. 2 (with reference to Cyrus), Heb. xii. 13. The author of Isa. xxxv anticipates that a raised way will be specially constructed and reserved for the holy pilgrims to Zion, along which the unclean shall not be permitted to travel, and from which the godless ('fools shall not go to and fro on it') shall be excluded, while it will be too elevated for wild beasts to climb up to it.

for I am . . . firstborn: cf. 20, where also Ephraim is used of the northern tribes, Israel in the narrower sense of the term as contrasted with Judah. It is not uncommon for Yahweh to be represented as the Father of Israel in the wider sense, and Israel as Yahweh's son, sometimes His firstborn son (Exod. iv. 22, 'Israel is my son, my firstborn'), while in Ps. lxxxix. 27 Yahweh says with reference to the king, 'I also will make him my firstborn.' The thought that Ephraim as contrasted with Judah possesses the right of the firstborn is rare. We read in 1 Chron. v. 1–3 that while Reuben was the firstborn he forfeited his birthright, by his

10 Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off; and say, He that scattered Israel

misconduct, to the sons of Joseph. In 2 Sam. xix. 43 the LXX represents the men of Israel (i.e. the ten tribes) as saying to the men of Judah 'I am older' (*literally* 'firstborn') 'than thou.' In Hos. xi. 1 Israel must apparently mean the people as a whole, since the reference is to the Exodus (unless Hosea believed that Judah was not in Egypt), but he continues in 3, 'Yet I taught Ephraim to go,' as if 'Israel' and 'Ephraim' could be used interchangeably. There is much force in Cornill's plea that a post-exilic writer would hardly have spoken of Ephraim in this way, and in his inference that this clause is the work of Jeremiah. He regards it as the continuation of 5 and as effecting the transition to 15 ff. With the deletion of 6 it is easier to retain the clause. If 6 is retained for Jeremiah, this clause obviously cannot follow upon it, and it is questionable if it follows appropriately on 5; apart from the difficulty of interpolating it between 5 and 6. Yet if it is from Jeremiah it cannot have originally belonged to a context so saturated with Deutero-Isaianic words and ideas. We may then either take it as post-exilic like the context in which it stands, in spite of the difficulty that a Palestinian Jew should accord the precedence to Ephraim, or regard it as the work of Jeremiah which is out of its original connexion. In the present writer's opinion it would stand at the close of 20 more fitly than anywhere else in the chapter.

10. The proclamation recalls Isa. xli. 1, xlii. 10, xlix. 1; moreover in each of these passages 'the isles' are mentioned, a very characteristic phrase of the Second Isaiah, used, with a somewhat indeterminate application, of the coastlands and islands of the Mediterranean, often with a suggestion of distance as here ('isles afar off'). The nations learn that it was Yahweh who had sent His people into exile. Ezekiel regards the glory of Yahweh as compromised not only by the sin of Israel, which stained His reputation among the heathen, but by the punishment, which after much forbearance He had inflicted on Israel, inasmuch as this exposed Him to the taunt of the heathen that He was powerless to defend His own people: cf. Isa. lii. 5. Hence it is a theological necessity for Ezekiel that Yahweh should make plain to the nations by the restoration of Israel that He had been responsible for its captivity, and had not yielded to external necessity. So the author of this passage proclaims to the nations that it was Yahweh, who had scattered His people, who would now bring them back from the dispersion.

declare. If the persons addressed in the two clauses are the same, the nations are first to hear the word, then declare it in

will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the LORD hath ransomed Jacob, and re- 11
deemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, 12
and shall flow together unto the goodness of the LORD,

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the far lands. Perhaps, however, the author meant nothing so definite as this, his language being rhetorical rather than exact. The present writer suspects that the text originally ran, 'give ear, ye isles afar off.' Cf. Isa. xlix. 1, where the word rendered 'Listen' is that translated 'Hear' in our passage, and a synonym (though not the same as here proposed) occurs in the parallel line. In any case 'and say' should probably be struck out.

will gather . . . flock: based on Isa. xl. 11; cf. Jer. xxiii. 3, Ezek. xxxiv. 12 ff.

11. ransomed . . . redeemed. The former of these verbs is not used by Jeremiah with reference to the people, and once only besides (xv. 21); the latter is not used at all, occurring elsewhere in the book only in l. 34: both are favourite expressions of the Psalmists, the latter of the Second Isaiah also.

stronger than he: cf. Ps. xxxv. 10, Isa. xlix. 24, 25.

12. When the people are thus settled in Palestine they come to Zion to celebrate their deliverance: cf. Isa. li. 11 (quoted in xxxv. 10). It is not clear, however, what is meant by the words 'shall flow together unto the goodness of the LORD.' They might be a description of a feast on Yahweh's bounty, the fruits of the earth, for which the tribes stream (li. 44, Isa. ii. 2, Mic. iv. 2) to Zion, like the feast upon the tithe, which Deuteronomy had transferred from the local sanctuaries to Jerusalem. This is what the parallelism suggests, but the alternative view that they stream from Zion after their thanksgiving to enjoy the bounty of Yahweh in their own home suits much better the enumeration which follows. If this is the thought, it must be owned that it is obscurely expressed. Duhm accordingly suggests that 'flow' is a variant of 'sing,' which he transfers from the former part of the line to take its place, 'and sing concerning the goodness of the LORD.' Cornill agrees that 'flow' is unsuitable, but he retains the present text, taking the word to mean here 'to beam.' It occurs in Ps. xxxiv. 5, 'They looked unto him, and were lightened,' and in Isa. lx. 5, where the A.V. rendered 'flow together' as here, but the R.V. has corrected it to 'be lightened.' This rendering would not be so suitable here; 'shall be radiant over' would bring out the sense.

goodness: i. e. bounty; the word has a material, not a spiritual reference.

to the corn, and to the wine, and to the oil, and to the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any
13 more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old together: for I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make
14 them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

15 [J] Thus saith the LORD: A voice is heard in Ramah,

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wine: i.e. 'must' or 'new wine,' see Driver's additional note on Joel i. 10 (*Joel and Amos*, pp. 79 ff.). The corn, wine, and oil are mentioned together in Hos. ii. 8, 22, and 'the increase of thy kine and the young of thy flock' are added in Deut. vii. 13, similarly Deut. xii. 17.

their soul . . . garden: cf. Isa. lviii. 11; 'watered' should rather be 'saturated.' The metaphor is far more expressive in the East, where drought is so common. For them the parched wilderness will rejoice and blossom as the rose; their life will be one of inward tranquillity and refreshment, of outward prosperity and peace; there will be no retrenchment of whatever is needed to bring the best fruit out of them, all their desire will be fulfilled. [The reference to this clause in vol. i, p. 55, is due to an oversight and should be deleted; the passage is probably not Jeremiah's.]

and they . . . at all: cf. Isa. li. 11. The word rendered 'sorrow' means 'to languish' or 'pine.' Cf. Deut. xxviii. 65.

13. The first clause of the verse draws upon 4, the second has a parallel in Zech. viii. 4, 5.

together: i.e. shall rejoice together, but we should probably read, with the LXX, 'shall be glad' instead of 'together;' the difference is merely one of pointing. In any case it is simply the virgin who is represented as dancing; it need hardly be said that the type of dancing familiar to modern readers is not intended.

14. The soul or appetite of the priests is satiated (literally 'saturated,' Isa. xliii. 24, Ps. xxxvi. 9) with fatness (Isa. lv. 2, 'let your soul delight itself in fatness'). When Yahweh's bounty had satisfied the people with abundance of corn and wine and oil, of flocks and herds, then their thank-offerings would be proportionately abundant, and the priest's portion would be very rich.

15-22. Here we meet once more with a genuine poem by Jeremiah, in which the qualities of his genius as the poet of the heart are displayed in full measure. Its subject is the return of lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her

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Ephraim; like the earlier poems in this section, it seems to belong to the prophet's first period. Delitzsch considers it to be the prophecy mentioned in xl. 1 as given to Jeremiah after Nebuzaradan 'had let him go from Ramah,' but not actually recorded. His view is endorsed by Orelli. But the basis is altogether too slender, nothing can safely be built on the incongruity of xl. 1 with the sequel; and the reference to Ramah was probably not occasioned by Jeremiah's presence there after the capture of Jerusalem. If we could regard xxx–xxxi as a prophecy uttered by Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem, the occasion suggested by Delitzsch would be better worth consideration. But at this time the prophet's thoughts and emotions would be centred on the tragedy which was in progress rather than on the long-continued exile of the northern tribes.

15. Cf. iii. 21. Rachel is here represented as weeping for the children she has lost, the northern tribes who have gone into exile. It is no mere poetical figure as a modern reader would naturally regard it, but the tribal ancestress is stirred from her rest in the grave to wail for the sons of whom she has been bereaved. The shrill lamentation is heard beyond the limits of her tomb; and like her husband, when he believed that Joseph their son was dead (Gen. xxxvii. 35), she refused to be comforted (cf. Ps. lxxvii. 2). Probably some natural phenomenon had been interpreted, in harmony with popular ideas, of which Jeremiah makes such effective use, as the bitter weeping of Rachel for the fate of her children. The passage does not indeed mention Rachel's grave, and we might think of her as raising her keen on the heights of Ramah as she surveyed the desolated home of her descendants. But the other view is more probable. The grave of Rachel is in Gen. xxxv. 16–20, xlviii. 7, placed between Bethel and Ephrath, a little distance from the latter place. Ephrath is identified in these passages with Beth-lehem. This identification underlies the application of our passage to Herod's massacre of the children in Beth-lehem, in Matt. ii. 17, 18. But it can hardly be correct. The site of Rachel's grave is fixed by 1 Sam. x. 2 as 'in the border of Benjamin.' The border intended is that between Benjamin and Ephraim, near Bethel (1 Sam. x. 3), not that between Benjamin and Judah. Bethel was ten miles, Ramah five miles, north of Jerusalem; and these indications forbid an identification of the clan-mother's sepulchre with the traditional site, which is four miles south of Jerusalem and one mile north of Bethlehem. Nor would it be a natural situation, since Rachel had no connexion with Judah. It has been held by some eminent scholars, including Nöldeke and Dillmann, that there were two traditions touching the site. It is, however, more probable that

children; she refuseth to be comforted for her children,
16 because they are not. Thus saith the LORD: Refrain
thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for
thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they
17 shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there
is hope for thy latter end, saith the LORD; and *thy* chil-
18 dren shall come again to their own border. I have surely
heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus*, Thou hast chas
tised me, and I was chastised, as a calf unaccustomed *to
the yoke*: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou

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the words 'that is Beth-lehem' in Gen. xxxv. 15, xlviii. 7 are a gloss, occasioned by the fact that elsewhere Ephrath is identified with Beth-lehem. In that case the Ephrath mentioned in these passages is a place otherwise unknown.

16. To the bitter weeping of Rachel for the loss of her children, Yahweh replies in words of gracious comfort, as to the bitter weeping of her children on account of their sins, in iii. 21, 22. The mother is assured that her work will be rewarded. She has toiled for her children, borne them in sorrow and reared them with untiring labour; but her pains have been vainly spent, for all she has lavished she has had no return. A century ago the death-wail had proclaimed the blighting of all her hopes, and still the sound of her lamentation is to be heard in Ramah. And now Yahweh bids her cease from her sorrow; there will be a reward for her labour, the children of whom she thought herself irretrievably bereaved will come back once more, to brighten the eyes so long dimmed by tears.

17. This is regarded by several scholars as a variant of 16^b, but opinion is divided on the question which is the original. The fact that the LXX gives a much shorter text in 17 may be variously interpreted, and it would be precarious to infer on this ground that 17 is a later addition. It is by no means certain that we have variants before us, but if so, it would be better to sacrifice 17 than the more distinctive and powerful 16^b.

18. While the mother weeps for her bereavement, the children bemoan themselves for their sin. Ephraim confesses that his chastisement had been deserved. He had acted like a calf which had not been broken in, undisciplined and self-willed. He has found it hard to kick against the goad, and punishment has taught him the wisdom and blessedness of obedience.

turn . . . be turned. This rendering suggests that 'turn' is used in its spiritual sense. It would be better to substitute 'I will art the LORD my God. Surely after that I was turned, 19

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turn' for 'I shall be turned,' since to the modern reader the latter rendering implies that the verb is passive, whereas in older English it was used in a neuter sense (see Driver, p. 366). The meaning is then that if Yahweh will take the initiative in turning the heart of Ephraim towards Him, Ephraim will on his part accept the Divine leading and turn to his God with all his heart. In itself this gives an admirable sense, for in all conversion there is the Divine initiative met by the human response. But we seem to have passed beyond this stage here; Ephraim has already experienced the Divine attraction and responded to it. Accordingly it is better to translate 'bring me back, and I will return,' i.e. bring me back to my own land (cf. iv. 1).

19. Surely . . . repented: a difficult clause. If the sense of 18 is correctly given in R.V., the obvious meaning of this clause is that Ephraim's repentance followed his return to God. It is no doubt true that as the religious life deepens, repentance for the sinful past also grows deeper, since with widening and purer vision the sense of the guilt and heinousness of sin increases. But it would be inappropriate to import such a consideration here. The repentance is the first sorrow for sin which precedes the return to God. Obviously the meaning cannot be either that Ephraim repents after his restoration to Palestine. Accordingly the text can only be rendered, as several scholars take it, 'after I turned [from thee] I repented.' This implies a double sense of the word 'turn' in the same context. For this viii. 4, iii. 12, 14, 22 are quoted. In each of these cases, however, the sense could hardly be misunderstood, whereas here 'after I turned' takes up 'I will turn' in the preceding verse, and irresistibly suggests the same sense. Accordingly the text is suspicious. The LXX reads 'after my captivity,' which involves little change in the Hebrew. The sense is more satisfactory than the expression; Duhm accepts the reading, but regards it as a marginal gloss, and changes 'instructed' into 'chastised,' reading 'Surely I repented after I was chastised, I smote upon my thigh.' This gives a smoother text, but the reason for the insertion of such a gloss is far from clear. Giesebrecht prefers the Hebrew to the LXX and retains 'instructed,' but agrees with Duhm in striking out the words in question as a gloss. Cornill retains the words with a slight correction, and connects with the closing words of 18, but he expunges 'after that I was instructed,' which he regards as philologically dubious. He renders 'For thou art Yahweh *my* God, and to thee do I turn. I repent and smite,' &c. He thus gets rid of what *he* feels to be the main objection, the repetition of 'for' (disguised in R.V. by the rendering of the second by 'Surely') which gives two reasons for 'I will turn.'

I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded,
20 because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for as often as I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels [a] are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.

[a] Heb. *sound*

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smote upon my thigh. This gesture was a sign of the uttermost grief, as we learn from Ezek. xxi. 12. Our equivalent, as Cornill says, would be 'I smote upon my breast.'

the reproach of my youth. According to usage this should mean that Ephraim's youth was an occasion of reproach. But in this context it must mean the reproach for the sins of his youth. Duhm reads simply 'I did bear reproach,' i.e. of exile; he thinks that 'of my youth' is the corruption of a gloss meaning 'on account of my guilt.' Cornill deletes the whole clause.

20. In this beautiful soliloquy of Yahweh, the prophet does not shrink from the boldest anthropomorphism. Whenever the name of Ephraim passes His lips the tender memory revives in His heart. True, it is with horror and with threatening that He must speak of his conduct, yet the mention of his name even in anger revives all the ancient love. Moved to amazement by the paradox of His conflicting emotions, He asks Himself the reason. Is it because Ephraim is His darling child that, in spite of all his ingratitude and disobedience, the old affection surges up irrepressibly at every mention of his name?

speak against him: better 'speak of him.' The rendering in the text is adopted by several scholars, but although the speaking was normally of this character, the translation 'against' unduly narrows the thought. It is not simply the formal denunciation that is intended; the most casual utterance of the name brings all the happy memories back. Giesebrecht reads 'am angry with him,' but the present text gives a wholly satisfying sense.

earnestly remember. The meaning is not that whenever the name of Ephraim is uttered, Yahweh remembers him for good, and resolves on his restoration, but that the old happiness of their relations forces itself on His attention.

therefore . . . upon him. Since Yahweh has not been able to dislodge the love for Ephraim from His heart, or consign the ancient relationship to oblivion, the affection which yearns over His prodigal son must be satisfied by his restoration to His favour.

Set thee up waymarks, make thee guide-posts: set 21
thine heart toward the high way, even the way by which
thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again
to these thy cities. How long wilt thou go hither and 22
thither, O thou backsliding daughter? for the LORD hath

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21. Set thee . . . guide-posts. The injunction is strange. As Cheyne says: 'Surely the setting up of guide-posts belongs not to the travellers, but to friendly persons who prepare the way for them' (*Critica Biblica*, p. 70). The word rendered 'guide-posts' occurs here only, if the reading is correct, since elsewhere the same form means 'bitterness' (as in 15, 'weeping of bitterness'), and that is unsuitable here. The sense required by the parallelism is 'sign-posts,' and we may either assign this meaning to it, or, following the LXX, which seems to give a transliteration rather than a translation, read *timmorim*. This word means 'palm-trees,' but since a cognate word is used in x. 5 in the sense 'pillar' (so R.V. marg., see note), a similar sense is assumed here. The erection of waymarks is often interpreted as designed to save stragglers, who may have strayed from the main body, from getting lost. Duhm thinks Israel is bidden set up the waymarks in spirit; remembering the path by which she had come into exile, she should in thought erect the sign-posts to guide her return. But this, though favoured by the following clause, is rather artificial, and the more usual interpretation is precarious. For 'waymarks' Rothstein (in Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*) prefers 'watchmen' (*tsōphīm*), and is very dubious about the suggested emendation of the parallel term, though he accepts it in Kautzsch's translation. It is perhaps best to acquiesce in the usual view as to the general drift of the passage without placing any undue confidence in the correctness of the text.

set thine heart . . . wentest. Let Israel turn her thoughts again to the road, by which she had travelled the bitter road to exile; now she may think on it with delight, for it is the way which will lead her home.

these thy cities. The writer is obviously in Palestine.

22. To the exhortation in the preceding verse, the prophet adds what is at once remonstrance and appeal. How long will Israel hesitate to believe and act upon the gracious promise? She flutters hither and thither in her indecision, let her strike out a clear undistracted course! In such a passage the epithet 'backsliding' strikes a jarring note. The LXX reads 'dishonoured;' the best correction is Cornill's 'despoiled' (*hashshedūdah*) which involves the change of two consonants.

for the LORD . . . a man. This passage is very difficult and created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall encompass a man.

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has occasioned much discussion. It must describe something wholly out of the ordinary course, something unprecedented in nature or human experience (cf. Isa. xliii. 19, Num. xvi. 30). If the expression is borrowed from a popular proverb, as is commonly supposed, the point will be that Yahweh will bring the proverbially impossible to pass. Many think the meaning is 'A woman shall protect a man,' and this is itself variously explained: Israel shall protect Yahweh, i. e. His Temple in which He dwells; or the Messiah is protected by his mother; or less obviously unlikely, the land will be so peaceful that the woman will no longer need protection from the man, but will be able to accord it to him, but in such happy conditions what protection does the man need? Others take the clause to mean that the woman will cling about the man; Israel will no longer hold Yahweh at a distance, but seek Him and cleave to Him. The new thing is that the woman woos the man, inverting the normal relationship. But this does not well harmonize with the fact that it is Yahweh who takes the initiative and creates a new thing. Nor does this any more than the previous rendering justify the description with which the clause is introduced. Such an unparalleled event as this demands seems to be expressed by Ewald's translation, 'A woman shall be turned into a man.' This is somewhat precarious as a rendering of the present text, but Duhm by a trifling emendation has removed this objection. He takes it, however, as a witty gloss by a reader, who on account of the language is to be assigned to the post-exilic period. The point of the annotation is, he thinks, that Israel, which had been spoken of earlier in the passage as a male, is now represented as a female. But, as Cornill points out, this would be more than a trivial witticism; introduced with the statement that Yahweh was creating a new thing, it would be a piece of blasphemy. Besides, such changes of representation are too common in Hebrew poetry for such a gloss to have any point. If this translation is right, the point must be that Israel, the weak, timid, irresolute woman (of course it is an Oriental who is writing), will be turned into a strong brave man. If the Hebrew text is retained in its present or in Duhm's slightly emended form, this seems to be the best interpretation. Only it may be questioned whether it is really satisfactory. For while the fulfilment of the promise, taken in its literal sense, would be unprecedented indeed, this would not be so in the metaphorical sense here intended. Accordingly a question arises as to the correctness of the text. The LXX reads 'men shall go about in safety,' but so tame a promise is not so

[S] Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Yet 23
again shall they use this speech in the land of Judah and
in the cities thereof, when I shall [a] bring again their captivity: The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, O
mountain of holiness. And Judah and all the cities 24

[a] Or, *return to*

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good as the Hebrew, nor is the emendation of the Hebrew based upon it by Schmidt (*Enc. Bib.* 2384) acceptable. Something of a more portentous character would be expected. In the parallel passage which speaks of Yahweh as doing a new thing (Isa. xliii. 19), it is the transformation of nature involved in making 'a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.' The most satisfying sense, as Cheyne has seen (*Critica Biblica*, pp. 70, 71), would be yielded by a text which similarly assured the captives that Yahweh would miraculously remove the physical obstacles to their return. His emendation, however, 'the Negeb shall change as (into) the Arabah' (cf. Zech. xiv. 10), while closer to the traditional text than many of his conjectures, is nevertheless a good deal removed from it, and depends on his North Arabian theory. The present writer has no suggestion to make which he can regard as satisfactory, and must content himself with pointing out the difficulties which attach to other solutions.

23–26. To the prediction of Ephraim's restoration a prediction of Judah's similar restoration is appended. Probably this is not the work of Jeremiah, but belongs to the author of xxx, xxxi. It apparently presupposes the downfall of the Southern Kingdom; the reference to Jerusalem as the 'mountain of holiness' is not what we expect from Jeremiah, though the prophet does not describe it thus himself, but simply says that others will so designate it; and the points of contact with 12–14 suggest that the same view should be taken of both passages.

23. Yet again: implying that at the time this was written such speech could not be used, since the land was a desolation and the Temple a ruin.

bring again their captivity: see note on xxix. 14.

habitation of justice: the land of Judah or the capital is an abode in which righteousness dwells. 'Habitation' is literally 'homestead.'

mountain of holiness. The holy mountain may be either the mountain land of Judah, or Jerusalem, or simply the Temple hill. The last is perhaps the most probable. For the whole verse cf. Zech. viii. 3.

24. The inhabitants of Judah will be able to practise the agricultural and pastoral life without any fear of the spoiler.

thereof shall dwell therein together; the husbandmen,
25 and they that go about with flocks. For I have satiated
the weary soul, and every sorrowful soul have I replen-
26 ished. Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep
27 was sweet unto me. Behold, the days come, saith the

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25. In this lovely verse the promises of 12 and 14 are recalled. The weary soul is refreshed, the pining (see note on 12) soul replenished.

26. This is a difficult verse. The views, which have found favour with many commentators, that either God or the people is represented as speaking seem to be universally abandoned. The author of the verse is referring to himself. Often the verse has been explained that when the prophet awoke from the sleep in which the foregoing revelation had been communicated to him, his dream seemed sweet to him as he looked back upon it. Such a statement could not well have come from Jeremiah, who did not recognize that God revealed Himself in dreams. But the words 'and beheld' are not easy to harmonize with this interpretation. The 'sleep' or prophetic ecstasy is the condition to which vision in the fuller sense belongs, but here the prophet speaks as if with his awakening true vision returned. We can hardly escape the conclusion then that the writer is contrasting the dream with the stern realities of actual life. He means that when he returns to the hard facts, when the glow dies down and, as we put it, reason resumes its sway, the gorgeous fancies of the night pale in the cold light of day. Plainly it is not the prophet himself who utters this confession of disillusion. It is one of his readers, who, not necessarily in a mocking mood as Duhm believes, but rather with the deep yearning that would fain hope against hope, confesses how attractive the prospect is, but how unlikely of realization. Cornill thinks that the verse stood originally after 22, and that 'the isolated couplet' 25 should be struck out. Our verse would then refer to the prophecy of Ephraim's return in 1-22. He is inclined to think that its present position is due not to its original connexion with 23 ff., which would have been too slight for such a conclusion, but to the interpretation of these verses as standing in close connexion with 22 and the words of blessing on Jerusalem in 23 as spoken by the returned Ephraimites. A reader who was familiar with the hatred of Jew and Samaritan in the later period might well regard such anticipations of friendly relations as altogether too good to be true.

27-30. This passage raises critical difficulties. It falls into two parts (a) 27, 28, (b) 29, 30. The former may conceivably come from Jeremiah, though its connexion with 24 does not favour

LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched 28

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this, and it is written rather from the standpoint of the author of xxx, xxxi, dwelling on the union of Israel and Judah. The latter it is not easy to connect with Jeremiah. It is true that the proverb quoted was current among the people at this time, since the use of it is attacked by Ezekiel (xviii. 2, 3). But Ezekiel repudiates it as intrinsically false, and devotes a lengthy refutation to it; the writer of our passage seems to regard it as justifiable under the present conditions, but as inapplicable and uncalled for in the bright future to which he looks forward. Such a judgement we cannot easily reconcile with what we know of Jeremiah, a man who would have seen as clearly and felt as strongly as Ezekiel the essential injustice of a moral government which could be justly described in such a proverb.

27. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD. This formula, which we have met with previously in this section (xxx. 3), occurs with unusual frequency in this context (27, 31, 38). In three of these passages it introduces what is probably a non-Jeremianic oracle. But we ought not to permit this to prejudice us against the Jeremianic origin of the prophecy of the New Covenant.

I will sow . . . beast. The land of Palestine is at present thinly peopled. But Yahweh will break up His fallow ground and plant it with seed of man and beast, so that both may abound. The metaphor recalls Ezek. xxxvi. 9–11, Hos. ii. 23, though the point in the latter passage is different. Long after the return from captivity the complaint was made of the sparse population of the country, as we learn from the very striking passage Isa. xxvi. 16–19, which probably belongs to the latter part of the fourth century B. C. In that passage the repeopling of the depleted land is anticipated through a resurrection of pious Israelites. On those bodies buried in the earth the life-giving dew of God will descend, and they will come forth from the ground as the buried seed awakens to life and comes forth under the same quickening influence. Thus the old promises of innumerable posterity made to the patriarchs and repeated in Hos. i. 10, Ezek. xxxvi. 9–11 will be fulfilled.

the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The LXX reads simply 'Israel and Judah.' The point of the passage is that Israel and Judah, whose future blessedness has been separately described in the previous part of the prophecy, are now united: cf. iii. 18, l. 4; Isa. xi. 11–14; Ezek. xxxvii. 15–24; Hos. i. 11.

28. This verse is obviously intended to recall the terms of

over them to pluck up and to break down, and to overthrow and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over
29 them to build and to plant, saith the LORD. In those

Jeremiah's commission (i. 10) and his vision of the almond tree (i. 11, 12).

29. The popular proverb here quoted was current in the dark days of Judah's tragedy, as we learn from Ezek. xviii. 2, and the sentiment to which it gives such pungent expression is found in Lam. v. 7. It represents an antagonism to the ancient doctrine of solidarity, which had long been unchallenged in theory and carried out in practice. This doctrine had affirmed the mutual responsibility of the members of the group which formed its social unit. The individual had but little independent significance. If a man killed one who belonged to another clan, the individual aspect of the case was unimportant in comparison with the collective. The vital fact was that one clan had shed the blood of another clan, and the vengeance was directed not so much at the actual offender as at his clan as a whole. If a man broke the law or violated some taboo, then it was considered quite just that his family should suffer with him in expiation of his transgression. Achan's sons and daughters, and even his possessions, were stoned and burned along with the culprit himself (Joshua vii. 24, 25). The whole city of Nob was smitten with the edge of the sword, 'men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen and asses,' because Ahimelech the priest had helped David (1 Sam. xxii. 16–19). Saul's own children and grandchildren were hanged up before Yahweh to remove a famine caused by Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites in violation of Joshua's oath (2 Sam. xxi. 1–9). With the development of the social and political organization and the break-up of the older clan system, the cruel injustice of such treatment was more and more recognized. A noteworthy advance was made when Amaziah slew the conspirators who had slain his father, but spared their children (2 Kings xiv. 5, 6). The Deuteronomic Code explicitly enjoined that the fathers should not be put to death for the children or the children for the fathers, but every man for his own sin (Deut. xxiv. 16). And if conscience revolted in the sphere of the relations between man and man, it was natural that it should do so in that of the relations between man and God. It had seemed to an earlier age quite unexceptionable that God should visit the sins of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation. And still with bitter indignation it was urged that so in fact He acted. The very form in which the protest was expressed, reveals how deep the people felt the injustice to be. Their ancestors had sinned, no doubt, but what had their transgression been? It was as if a man had eaten sour grapes. In the days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But 30 every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

[J] Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will 31

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course of nature the effect of this would not simply be confined to the man himself, but it would be of the most transient character, and would leave no permanent mark behind it. Such had been the intrinsic quality of the fathers' sin as their children judged it. But in the moral government of God how unnatural had His treatment of the transgression been! The penalty had been transferred from ancestors to descendants, from the guilty to the innocent. And it was a penalty for a transgression of so trivial a character, which had properly no serious consequences and did no permanent moral damage. Thus they criticized God for undue interference with the chain of cause and effect; He had diverted the punishment from the guilty to the innocent, and He had treated the offence as far more grave than it was in reality. This criticism Ezekiel set himself to meet. He does not attempt to vindicate the truth of the traditional view, he affirms in the most uncompromising form the doctrine of individual responsibility. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die,' it and no other. While he fully agrees that merit and guilt, reward and punishment, should not be transferable, he repudiates the charge that the ways of Yahweh had been unequal. The proverb was false in point of fact; his own generation was not suffering from the entail of ancestral guilt, but reaping the harvest of its own transgression; moreover it rested on an estimate of sin which was altogether too light-hearted. The extreme form in which Ezekiel stated his position needed modification: there was a real problem, which in his zeal for God's honour he refused to see. It is noteworthy that the present passage differs from Ezekiel's discussion, in that it seems to recognize that the proverb has had and still has its justification, but that in the happy future retribution will follow the lines of strict justice.

set on edge: literally **blunted**.

30. his own iniquity. In this period there may still be sin of such a character as to merit death.

31–34. We now reach the great prophecy of the New Covenant. Its Jeremianic origin was questioned by Movers, who attributed it to the Second Isaiah. As already mentioned (p. 68), Stade was the first to reject the authenticity of xxx, xxxi, including this prophecy, but without assigning reasons; while Smend, who did assign reasons for the rejection of the whole, did not go into the question of this passage at any length, and so far as he did make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with

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so was answered by Giesebrecht in the first edition of his commentary. In his article 'Covenant' in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, Schmidt relegated the whole section to the period of the Graeco-Persian War, but neither in this article nor in those on 'Jeremiah' did he give any adequate proof of this position, but contented himself with a reference to Smend's discussion. A very searching investigation was devoted to the question by Duhm. He was driven from the acceptance of the authenticity only with great reluctance. Not unnaturally the surrender of it involved a much lower estimate of its value. The same phrases bear different meanings on different lips. What a later scribe, zealous for the Law, intended by this oracle seemed to him something far inferior to what Jeremiah would have meant by it; the criticism thus controls to some extent the exegesis, and the result is to belittle the passage. Instead of the splendid climax of Jeremiah's teaching, epoch-making as scarcely any other pre-Christian conception, we had the dwarfed ideal of a post-exilic legalist, devoid alike of originality and historical significance. It is among the chief merits of Cornill's commentary that it contains a brilliant refutation of Duhm's arguments, which it is to be hoped may prove a final vindication of the authenticity. No student of Jeremiah to whom it is accessible should fail to read this masterly argument. An article by Prof. W. J. Moulton in the *Expositor* for April, 1906, should also be mentioned. Marti firmly maintains the Jeremianic origin in the last edition (1907) of his *History of the Religion of Israel*. Prof. Cheyne has now definitely assigned the passage to a supplementer (*The Two Religions of Israel*, pp. 60, 61). Duhm says that if genuine the passage would be very important, since it would express the antithesis between the prophetic and Deuteronomic conception of religion. But this passage does not, he proceeds, contain such a contrast; it promises a new 'covenant' but not a new 'law,' only an inward conformity of the people with the Law; and it puts the stress on the good results which this will have for the people, but betrays no need for a higher kind of religion. If one is not dazzled by the expressions 'new covenant,' 'write on the heart,' the passage says no more about the individual than what Deuteronomy already regarded as possible (xxx. 11 ff.) and desirable (vi. 6-8), that each should be familiar with the Law and loyally obey it. A still greater objection is the bad, cumbersome, slipshod style, the prominence of such phraseology as is dear to the supplementers, the complete absence of original figures of speech, which are to be found even in the shortest poems of Jeremiah. The other criticisms made by Duhm are best discussed as they arise in the detailed interpretation of the passage, the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that 32

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but it is desirable to examine at this point those which have just been mentioned.

The present writer has argued (vol. i, pp. 12–14) that the opposition to Deuteronomy felt by Jeremiah was by no means so fundamental as several scholars, including both Duhm and Cornill, have asserted. But leaving this question aside, the Old Covenant was for Jeremiah that made by God with Israel at Sinai. And this, as Cornill has shown, had for its content and basis the Decalogue. This is clear from the description given in Jer. vii. The same is true of the present passage, where there is a clear contrast between the law written with God's finger on the tables of stone and the law written by God in the heart. Deuteronomy accordingly does not come into consideration at all; and the need for a new law to supersede the Decalogue would not have been felt by Jeremiah. The New Covenant is new not in the sense that it introduces a new moral and religious code, but that it confers a new and inward power of fulfilling the code already given. The Law ceases to be a standard external to the individual, it has become an integral part of his personality. The second objection is not without force. But the oracle may have been touched by supplementers, as so much of Jeremiah's prophecies, and the form in which it was first written down may have been due to Baruch. Even so not the substance alone, which is the vital matter, but also the form is largely Jeremianic. The vagueness, of which Duhm complains, disappears when the passage is taken out of its isolation and set in its context in Jeremiah's teaching as a whole. The charge that it is lacking in original poetic images is not weighty, unless we unjustifiably restrict Jeremiah's authentic utterances to the compass assigned them by Duhm; and for daring originality the thoughts of the passage are not surpassed even by any utterance of Jeremiah himself.

We may pass then from these general considerations to the detailed study of the passage, feeling that so far nothing has been urged against its authenticity that need shake our confidence in it. The thought of the passage has been expounded and its significance set forth in the Introduction to this commentary (vol. i, pp. 43–48), and the writer would be glad if the student would read the notes which follow in connexion with that more general discussion (see also his notes on Heb. viii. 8–13).

31. a new covenant. On the Hebrew idea of 'covenant' the Bible Dictionaries and histories of the religion of Israel may be consulted. The term means generally a compact or agreement made between two parties, though in some cases it is simply imposed by one on the other, or may be a promise to which conditions are not attached. In antiquity the religion of a people

I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by

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was something that had grown with its growth, it had come down from immemorial antiquity. The relation between a clan and its deity was a natural and inevitable relation. The religion of Israel constituted an exception to this, in that it was a covenant religion. In other words, the relation between Yahweh and Israel was neither inevitable nor compulsory. Yahweh, free to choose any nation, chose Israel to be His people, and Israel took Yahweh to be its God, promising obedience to His commands. This covenant was ratified at Sinai. But Israel's inveterate disobedience had released Yahweh from His obligation. Hence the old Sinaitic covenant was annulled by the dissolution of Israel's national existence. But while the Old Covenant was thus abolished, the ties which bound Yahweh to His people could not be so readily snapped. Hence a New Covenant will replace the old, but a covenant which will provide against the failure that had overtaken its predecessor, and infallibly ensure its own permanent validity. The expression 'to make a covenant' is properly 'to cut a covenant,' perhaps derived from the custom mentioned in xxxiv. 18 (see note).

with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. In view of 33, where 'the house of Israel' alone is mentioned, it is probable that we should regard 'and . . . Judah' as an insertion. Jeremiah meant by 'Israel' the whole people including Judah. The author of these chapters, taking 'Israel' to mean the northern tribes, adds the reference to Judah, in conformity with his desire to emphasize the restoration not of these only but also of Judah. The omission of the words also restores the Qina rhythm. It is with the nation, not with the individual, that the New Covenant is made.

32. The prophet proceeds to define the New Covenant, first negatively in this verse, and then positively in 33, 34. It is not to be like the covenant made at the Exodus, the Sinaitic covenant. In what respect it was different has been already explained (p. 103). The verse is cumbrously expressed, but it would impoverish the passage to strike it out. The contrast with the Old Covenant needed to be brought out and its failure explicitly mentioned, in order to justify the making of a New Covenant. Cornill lightens the style and restores a regular Qina measure by omitting 'to bring them out of the land of Egypt' and 'saith the LORD.' Giesebrecht omits the latter, but in the former case strikes out simply 'the land of,' though he inserts 'aforetime' after 'I made.' This, while less satisfactory in form, is better in substance. Cornill thinks that the definite mention of the Exodus was unnecessary, since it was quite clear what was intended. But there was a possibility of misunderstanding, which is precluded by this clause.

the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; [a] which my covenant they brake, although I was [b] an husband unto them, saith the LORD. But this is the covenant 33

[a] Or, *forasmuch as they brake my covenant*
[b] Or, *lord over them*

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in the day. Naturally Jeremiah does not mean the day on which the Hebrews left Egypt, any more than in vii. 22 (see note), but at that period.

took them by the hand. The metaphor is of a child guided by his father in his faltering steps; it is a beautiful picture of Yahweh's gentleness and loving care: cf. Hos. xi. 1–4, which may have been in the prophet's mind, Isa. xl. 11, xli. 13, xlii. 6, li. 18.

I was an husband. The first person is emphatic, as is the third person in the preceding clause. The verb is found also in iii. 14, where it certainly means 'I am a baal,' that is, both lord and husband (see the note). This does not yield a good sense here, and some have wished to give the word the meaning 'to loathe,' 'to reject.' This is philologically dubious, but the sense is that required, and a very slight alteration in the Hebrew (*ga'alti* for *ba'alti*) proposed by Giesebrecht gives it. Probably the LXX, which is quoted in Heb. viii. 9 (see the notes on that passage), read this verb, so also the Syriac. We should accordingly substitute here 'and I abhorred them.' Duhm accepts this emendation and draws the inference that Jeremiah cannot have written the passage. The rejection must refer to the exile, but a writer who speaks of this as a rejection of the 'fathers' must himself have lived long afterwards. But this is to overlook the fact that the 'fathers' are in the first instance the generation that came out of Egypt, whom Jeremiah would rightly so describe, since they belonged to the distant past. If we are to press his language, we should be more justified in referring the pronouns which follow ('they,' 'them') to the Hebrews of the Exodus than to the Jews of the Captivity. But obviously Jeremiah is not speaking with such strictness; he looks at the nation as having a continuous life, and while the 'fathers' refers at first to the Hebrews in the wilderness, the prophet passes in the next clauses to the thought of the people throughout its history of rebellion which finally drove Yahweh to the last extremity. The rejection is not to be identified with the exile, it is its antecedent. Besides, the exile of the northern tribes was very present to Jeremiah's mind, and that had taken place a good deal more than a century earlier. We are accordingly not justified in drawing the inference that the passage must have been written long after Jeremiah's time.

33. Now follows the positive description of the New Covenant.

that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD; I will put my law in their inward parts,

Yahweh will put His law in the inward parts and write it on the heart. Duhm raises the objection, Why did not God do this at the first? Is He not to blame for the failure of the Old Covenant? Cornill points out that such an objection banishes the idea of history, on which elsewhere Duhm himself lays such stress, and we might as well ask why God did not send Jesus at the Creation instead of in the fullness of time. A second objection is that we receive no explanation of the writing of the law on the heart. The writer does not speak of a new or a better law, or any transformation of man's nature. He simply says Yahweh will accomplish it. But such an objection is valid only if the present passage is taken by itself and treated as the author's complete message. If Jeremiah was its author, then it stands in a very rich context, which amply supplies the explanation of what is here left unexplained. He had elsewhere spoken of the circumcision of the heart (iv. 4), he had communicated the Divine promise 'I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD,' and announced their return to Him with their whole heart (xxiv. 7). On this point what is said in the Introduction should be read (vol. i, pp. 43, 44). The 'new birth,' the 'new heart,' as the Gospel proclaims them, are really implied in this great saying. It is not the author's ideal that the nation should become a people of legalists and ritualists, familiar with all the regulations of the ceremonial law and instinctively obeying them. It is rather that in the regenerate personality there should reside the eternal principles of religion and morality as the spring of all action. The Jeremianic origin of the passage is attested by the Second Isaiah's reference (Isa. li. 7) to 'the people in whose heart is my law,' which seems to depend on this verse.

I will put . . . write it. 'Instead of an external law engraven on tables of stone, there will be the law written on tables that are hearts of flesh. An external code must always be rigid and inelastic; frequently it affords no guidance to conduct, and its control acts as an irritant to the natural man. The law written on the heart implies an inner principle which can deal with each case of conscience sympathetically as it arises, and can ensure the fulfilment of its behests, because it has brought the inner life into perfect harmony with itself. The heart, and thus the whole life, has with the engraving of the law upon it, itself become new. The heart embraces not only the emotional and ethical but also the intellectual life. And thus, by being transformed from a foreign ruler into a native and inward impulse, the law gains the power of self-fulfilment.' (Quoted from the editor's and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall 34 teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the

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commentary on *The Epistle to the Hebrews* in *The Century Bible*, pp. 171, 172).

and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Such had indeed been the relationship which the Old Covenant had been designed to establish (Exod. xix. 5, 6, 2 Sam. vii. 24); but God's purpose had been ultimately thwarted by Israel's disobedience. This had created a serious problem for earlier prophets, who solved in various ways the intolerable contradiction involved in the relationship of a holy God to a sinful people: Jeremiah solves it by this doctrine of the New Covenant. The people, not the individual, remains with him as with his predecessors the religious unit. 'But the advance he makes is that Israel's side of the covenant is perfectly fulfilled, because religion has become a matter for the individual. While it was regarded exclusively as national, it was impossible for it to be other than superficial and external. By carrying it into the heart, it became personal, and because each individual was righteous, the aggregate of individuals that formed the nation must be righteous too. Thus we may say that individualism guaranteed the reality of national religion. But by this transformation in the idea of religion the national limitations were really transcended, and since the moral and spiritual are the universal, with Jeremiah's doctrine of the New Covenant universalism was born. The State could perish, and sacrifice be brought to an end, but religion had been detached from these accidents, and could therefore survive them.' (*Hebrews* in *The Century Bible*, p. 172.)

34. As things are, the knowledge of Yahweh is derived from external sources, so that one man communicates it to another, and he in turn to a third. But in the blessed time to come, this knowledge will be the property of each, an inward possession, implanted by God Himself, who gives to all, from the least to the greatest, a heart to know Him (xxiv. 7). And this knowledge is not just the knowledge of the law, even in the highest sense, still less does the prophet mean that each is to become an expert in all the minute regulations of the ceremonial law. Such would, indeed, be an ideal unworthy of Jeremiah. But happily we know from himself what the phrase 'to know me,' so often on his lips (ii. 8, iv. 22, ix. 3, 6, 24, xxii. 16, xxiv. 7), really meant for him. In xxii. 16 he speaks of Josiah as evincing his knowledge of

greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.
35 [S] Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light

Yahweh in that 'he judged the cause of the poor and needy;' and still more definitely in ix. 24 he describes the knowledge of God, which is man's true glory, to be the insight into His character: 'let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight.' Such an insight into the character of Yahweh, it is the Divine purpose to implant in every man. And a character and conduct on the part of each, corresponding to Yahweh's own character and conduct, will be the inevitable outcome of this gracious dealing with them. We have an echo of this verse in Isa. liv. 13, 'And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD.'

I will forgive . . . no more. Naturally, ideal relations could not be restored while the sin of Israel remained unpardoned and ever present to the Divine consciousness. The disturbing element must be removed, an amnesty in the fullest sense of the term must be proclaimed. Clemency will forgive, but, a strange paradox, Omniscience will forget!

35–37. This section is regarded by several, though not, as is sometimes said, by all critics as a later addition. Movers and Hitzig attributed it to the Second Isaiah; this view was rejected by Graf, who, however, thought that 35, 36 seemed like a supplementary insertion, 37 like a marginal gloss. Giesebrecht, Kuenen, Stade, Cornill, Kent, and Gillies treat it as late; Duhm, it need hardly be said, regards it as non-Jeremianic, but he also assigns it to another author than 31–34. It is, nevertheless, attributed to Jeremiah by Orelli, König, Bulmerincq, Rothstein, Köberle, and apparently Driver. In the LXX 37 is placed before 35, but it would be too hasty to judge the whole passage on this ground; at most it points to a certain probability that 37 was originally a marginal gloss, which has been taken into the text, now at this point now at that. Verse 37 is also, alike in style and content, scarcely on Jeremiah's level; the measuring of heaven and searching out of its foundations has no inner connexion, as Giesebrecht points out, with the rejection of Israel. The strenuous nationalism in the whole passage is scarcely favourable to its authenticity. It is true that Jeremiah was a fervent patriot, but he did not put patriotism in the first place, and the very strong, one might almost say exaggerated, expression here given to the thought is not what we expect from him. Further the points of contact with the Second Isaiah are very striking. Giesebrecht quotes as parallels to the form and content of 35 the

by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which [a] stirreth up the sea, that the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name:
If these ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, 36

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[a] Or, *stilleth the sea, when &c.* See Isa. li. 15.

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following: Isa. xl. 12, 26, xlii. 5, xliv. 24 ff., xlv. 7, 18. The present writer cannot attach the same weight to these as several critics do, since he does not agree that prophetic passages which speak of Yahweh's work in creation or the rule of nature are necessarily later (see notes on v. 20–22). For the words 'If these ordinances depart from before me' Giesebrecht compares Isa. liv. 9, 10, though this is not a very close parallel. The words 'which stirreth up the sea, that the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name' are found in precisely the same form in Isa. li. 15. The unmetrical style is also urged against the passage. It must of course be remembered that the verses are prejudiced by their position. It is difficult to believe that Jeremiah can have uttered them as the climax to the prophecy of the New Covenant. If it were necessary to hold that they were written for their present position, it would be better to assign them to the compiler of xxx, xxxi. But if they are an independent fragment the case is not so clear. The fact that these chapters contain a great deal of secondary matter, the probably later origin of 37 which is closely connected with 35, 36, the nationalist character of the passage, and to some extent the points of contact with II Isaiah, incline the editor to regard 35, 36, as well as 37, as non-Jeremianic, but he cannot pretend to consider the arguments for this position as in any way conclusive.

35. the ordinances of the moon and of the stars. We should probably read, with the LXX, simply 'the moon and the stars.' The mention of 'the ordinances' with reference to moon and stars and not also to the sun is strange.

stirreth up the sea. The verb is used in this sense here and in Isa. li. 15, and also according to the majority of commentators in Job xxvi. 12, though it is not improbable that in the latter passage we should adopt the margin 'stilleth' (see the editor's note).

the LORD of hosts is his name. A similar formula occurs in all three of the 'creation passages' in Amos (iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 6), which are regarded by many scholars as later insertions.

36. these ordinances: i.e. the Divine decrees which the heavenly bodies obey, which not one of them dare disobey (Isa. xl. 26). Just as soon should those laws fail which hold the universe together as an ordered system, as Israel's national existence be finally destroyed.

then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a na-
37 tion before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD: If heaven
above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth
searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed
of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.
38 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city
shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananel
39 unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line
shall yet go out straight onward unto the hill Gareb, and
40 shall turn about unto Goah. And the whole valley of

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37. The point in the comparison is the impossibility of the events happening. As little as man can measure the expanse of heaven or work down to the bases on which the world's fabric rests, so little can God cast Israel away on account of its sin. This is hardly in the manner of such a prophet as Amos, who definitely contemplated the final rejection of Israel for its sin.

38–40. This is anti-climax indeed. It is hardly likely that a prophet such as Jeremiah would have concerned himself with the future boundaries of Jerusalem in this minute way. In the post-exilic period the people were much preoccupied with questions such as this and the restoration of the fortifications. The closest parallel is to be found in Zech. xiv, which may even have suggested our passage. The extent of the city is not the only point of interest to the author; he emphasizes also its dedication to Yahweh, both at the beginning and the end of the oracle.

38. the tower of Hananel. This is similarly mentioned in Zech. xiv. 10. Its position is defined by Neh. iii. 1, xii. 39 as at the north-east corner of the city, while **the gate of the corner,** which is also mentioned in Zech. xiv. 10, seems from 2 Kings xiv. 13, 2 Chron. xxvi. 9, to have been at the north-west corner. This verse accordingly indicates the limits of the north wall of the city from east to west.

39. the hill Gareb and **Goah** are mentioned nowhere else. Presumably we start from the north-west corner and turn south (Giesebrecht reads 'southward' instead of 'straight onward,' perhaps rightly) or south-west as far as the hill Gareb; from which the line makes a turn, perhaps due south till Goah is reached. For Goah Cheyne suggests Gibeah 'hill,' identifying it with Olivet.

40. The regeneration of Jerusalem is to go so far that even the unclean districts on the south, the valley of Hinnom defiled with human sacrifice (' the dead bodies '), are to be taken into the city and yet not to compromise its sanctity. Rather they will be the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

[S] The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD 32

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redeemed from their uncleanness by the mighty holiness resident within it, so that the whole city will be holy to Yahweh.

the ashes: properly 'fat,' i.e. the ashes which resulted from the burning of the fat of the victims.

the fields unto the brook Kidron. The Hebrew presents us with two alternative readings, one of which is adopted in R.V., while the other gives us a word which, if it is not a mere blunder, is not found elsewhere, and the meaning of which is uncertain; perhaps, as Graf supposed, places where rubbish was deposited. Cheyne follows Klostermann in reading 'furnaces.' The valley of Kidron is on the east of Jerusalem.

the horse gate: according to Neh. iii. 27, 28, was near the Temple on the south-east of Jerusalem.

xxxii. THE REDEMPTION OF A PIECE OF FAMILY PROPERTY BY JEREMIAH, AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

The incident here recorded is obviously historical, and its meaning lies on the surface. At a time when the outlook was very dark, and landed property seemed the most hopeless form of investment, Jeremiah exercised his right of redemption, and bought with all due legal formalities a field from his cousin Hanamel. By this action he expressed his conviction that, in spite of the impending destruction of the State and captivity of the people, the time would come when property would be bought, no longer as a venture of faith, but as one of the ordinary transactions of life in which security of tenure could be taken for granted. The reasons which prompted Hanamel's offer to his cousin are unknown, but probably the scarcity and the consequent high prices had reduced him to the necessity of selling his land. That he should have gone to Jeremiah is remarkable, in view of the bitter persecution the prophet had had to endure from his kinsmen at Anathoth. We gather further from the incident that Jeremiah was apparently possessed of a competence.

While the incident itself is clearly historical, the chapter raises difficult critical problems. The historical introduction explaining Jeremiah's circumstances at the time is regarded by most recent critics as secondary. In the prayer of Jeremiah Stade rejected in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was

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17-23, and found considerable support in this view. Duhm carried through the criticism to the extent of rejecting the whole of 16–44, and his results have been accepted by Cornill and Kent. Schmidt had independently reached the same result. Giesebrecht takes 1–5, 17–23, 28–42 as later insertions, while Gillies and Rothstein pass a similar judgement. The detailed discussion is best reserved for the notes; here the editor may simply say that he regards 1–5, 17–23, 28–35 as later additions; and 36–44 as Jeremianic in basis, but in its present form later than the destruction of Jerusalem, and perhaps worked over by the editor.

xxxii. 1–5. In the tenth year of Zedekiah Jeremiah received a revelation when he was imprisoned in the court of the guard. For the king had imprisoned him because he had said that Yahweh would give Jerusalem to the king of Babylon, and Zedekiah should be captured and taken to Babylon, and be there till Yahweh visited him, so that the war with the Chaldeans was doomed to failure.

6-15. Yahweh told me that Hanamel my cousin would come and ask me to buy his field in Anathoth, which I had the right to purchase. So when he came and asked me to do this, I knew that it was Yahweh who had told me. I bought the field for seventeen shekels, with all the due legal formalities, and gave the deed of purchase to Baruch, charging him to put them in an earthen vessel that they might be long preserved. For Yahweh proclaims that property shall once again be bought in the land.

16–27. When I had delivered the deed to Baruch I prayed thus: O Yahweh, Creator of the world, for whom nothing is too hard, merciful to thousands and repaying the children for the sins of their fathers, wise and mighty, observant of all men's ways that they may receive the due reward of their deeds, who didst win for Thyself a name in Egypt, and didst bring Israel thence with great wonders to this plentiful land, wherein Thy people have utterly disobeyed Thee, the siege mounts are here for the capture of the city, and by sword, famine, and pestilence it will be delivered into the hand of the Chaldeans; yet Thou hast said, Buy the field, although the city is given up to the Chaldeans. Then Yahweh answered, 'I am Yahweh, is anything too wonderful for me?'

28–35. Therefore thus saith Yahweh: I will deliver this city to the Chaldeans, who shall capture and burn it, polluted as it is with idolatry. The people have done evil from their youth, the city has provoked Me from the day it was built, so that I will remove it out of My sight for the sins which have angered Me. They have turned from Me in disobedience to My urgent instruction, the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. Now at that 2

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defiling My house with their idols, and offering their children to Molech, though I had never enjoined anything so horrible upon them.

36-44. Yet to this city, now captured by Babylon, I will bring back its people from their dispersion, and cause them to dwell safely in it. They shall be My people, I will be their God. I will give them a heart to fear Me, will make an everlasting covenant with them, and plant them in the land. As I have brought evil on them, so I will bring all the good I have promised. Fields shall again be bought in all parts of the land with all the due formalities of the law.

xxxii. 1-5. This introduction, narrating the circumstances in which the transactions here recorded took place, is apparently editorial. The suggestion which it conveys to the reader is that Jeremiah's imprisonment was due to Zedekiah's resentment at the prediction of his capture and exile to Babylon, whereas it was due rather to the hostility of the princes and those responsible for the conduct of the military defence. The king was as friendly to Jeremiah as he dared to be, and used his prerogative to protect him as far as possible. But the passage is quite trustworthy in its indication of the period at which the event happened. The prophet's arrest took place in the interval between the first and second part of the siege, when the Babylonian army had left Jerusalem on account of the relief expedition sent by Egypt. He used the opportunity to start for Anathoth to attend to his property there, but was arrested on the pretext that he was deserting to the Chaldeans. After many days spent in the prison, he was removed, on his own petition to the king, to the court of the guard, and remained there till the city was taken (xxxvii. 11-21, xxxviii. 28). It was while he was in this condition of honourable confinement, in which his friends were permitted to visit him, that Hanamel came to request him to buy his field. We do not know definitely whether the siege had been resumed, but since 'many days' had elapsed between Jeremiah's arrest and his removal to the court of the guard, the probabilities are that the city had been again invested. This view is also favoured by the statement in 2, 'at that time the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem.' In that case Hanamel would already be in Jerusalem, and had not come in from Anathoth in order to sell his land. (The contrary view taken by Cornill in his commentary, p. 359, is withdrawn, in favour of the view here taken, on p. xxxvii.)

1. the tenth year of Zedekiah. The siege of Jerusalem began in the ninth year of his reign (see xxxix. 1).

2. Jeremiah the prophet. We have here the same designation

time the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem : and
Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard,
3 which was in the king of Judah's house. For Zedekiah
king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost
thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold,
I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon,
4 and he shall take it ; and Zedekiah king of Judah shall
not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall
surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon,
and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes
5 shall behold his eyes ; and he shall lead Zedekiah to
Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the
LORD : though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not
prosper ?

6 [J] And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came

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which is so characteristic a feature in the Hebrew text of the section xxvii–xxix. It is omitted in the LXX.

the court of the guard. This was attached to the king's palace : cf. Neh. iii. 25. A portion of the court was apparently set apart for those whom for any reason it was expedient to keep under observation and restraint, but whom it was undesirable to herd with the inmates of the common prison. The term does not mean the court where the guard was stationed, but the court where prisoners were guarded (see Driver, p. 367).

3–5 are a parenthesis, explaining the grounds on which Zedekiah had imprisoned the prophet.

3. For: so Driver. It is more generally translated 'Where.'

5. The latter part of this verse ('until . . . prosper') is absent from the LXX, and is presumably a later addition. The words 'until I visit him' suggest that a change was to take place in Zedekiah's fortunes, and therefore bears a favourable sense : nevertheless they are ambiguous, and, as such, unlikely to have been uttered by Jeremiah. We have no indication elsewhere that Zedekiah's condition was ameliorated. The author of this addition may have been acquainted with some story of the kind, but it is more probable that he confused Zedekiah with Jehoiachin, to whom such a change of fortune actually came (lii. 31–34).

6. The present text makes the impression that Jeremiah related the incident which follows to Zedekiah in response to his question

unto me, saying, Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum 7
thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my
field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is
thine to buy it. So Hanamel mine uncle's son came to 8
me in the court of the guard according to the word of the
LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that
is in Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin: for the
right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine;
buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of

(3-5), which is obviously impossible. The LXX reads 'And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying,' and this is accepted by several scholars. It would also be possible to surmount the difficulty by omitting the words 'Jeremiah said.'

7. thine uncle. Usually it is thought, probably correctly, that Shallum, not Hanamel, was Jeremiah's uncle, and this is supported by 9 and the Hebrew text of 8, which definitely speak of Hanamel as 'my uncle's son.' On the other hand, he is called 'my uncle' in 12, but we should probably read 'my uncle's son,' with LXX, Syriac, and a few Hebrew MSS.

the right of redemption. The word for 'redemption' is connected with the word *gō'ēl.* The *gō'ēl* was the next-of-kin, on whom various duties were imposed by this relationship (see Lev. xxv. 25 ff.). The duties had corresponding rights; the *gō'ēl* could choose whether he would exercise them or not, but till he declined no other could undertake them. Thus Boaz could not undertake this office for Ruth until the next-of-kin had declined it (Ruth iii. 9-13, iv. 1-12). Jeremiah had the right of preemption because he was actually the next-of-kin, as is indicated by the fact that he had 'the right of inheritance.' The regulations were made to secure that property was kept in the family. We must not press the term 'redemption' to mean that Hanamel's field had been already sold, and that he desired Jeremiah to buy it back. As the following verse shows, Hanamel was still the owner, but apparently was in need of money, as would be very intelligible in the situation. It is to be observed that at this time individual priests possessed landed property, and were able to dispose of it freely: contrast Lev. xxv. 34.

8. which is . . . Benjamin. These words should be omitted, with the LXX; obviously Jeremiah did not need to be told where Anathoth was situated. The words are a gloss introduced from i. 1.

Then I knew . . . the LORD. This is a very striking and instructive statement. In 6 he says, 'The word of the LORD came

9 the LORD. And I bought the field that was in Anathoth

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unto me.' Yet in the present verse we see that he did not know it to be the word of Yahweh till Hanamel actually came. Probably the prophet had a strong impression beforehand that Hanamel would come on this errand. It is by no means impossible that his own projected journey 'into the land of Benjamin, to receive his portion there, in the midst of the people' (xxxvii. 12), may have been connected with some such wish on the part of Hanamel to dispose of his property. Whether this was so or not, he was probably aware of his cousin's financial position and presence in the city, so that the presentiment that he would come to him had its origin in the actual conditions. But such a presentiment the prophet would not have dignified with the name 'the word of Yahweh;' only when it was fulfilled did he know that God had inspired it. Its Divine meaning, however, was not in the visit itself or in the premonition he had received, but in the conviction of Israel's happy restoration it gave him the opportunity of expressing in so vivid and impressive a manner. Just as he learnt a lesson while he watched the potter moulding the clay, so a similarly trivial and commonplace sale of land is seen to be charged with a deep significance. His act is a symbol and a prophecy, it is God's pledge that the old stable condition of things will be restored when there will be a settled state of society in which houses and land would be freely bought and sold. Thus he recognized that behind his cousin's action, and all unknown to him, the Divine impulse had been at work; and also in the preparation he had himself received for his cousin's request.

9. Recognizing God's hand in it all, Jeremiah without any demur buys the field and pays the price. The sum of seventeen shekels may appear small. We may reasonably assume, however, that Jeremiah paid the full price, not the 'prairie value,' which at such a time was all it might have been expected to fetch. Only by paying this could he have taught the lesson he was guided to convey, that property would regain its stability, and be bought for what it was intrinsically worth in normal conditions. The threshing floor and oxen of Araunah were sold for fifty shekels (2 Sam. xxiv. 24), the potter's field for thirty (Matt. xxvii. 3–10). Taking the value of the silver shekel at 2*s.* 9*d.*, seventeen shekels would be equivalent to £2 6*s.* 9*d.* of our money, but the purchasing power would of course be very much greater. Commentators often quote as a parallel the purchase by a Roman, at full price in public auction, of the ground on which Hannibal's army was encamped (Livy xxvi. 11).

that was in Anathoth: should be omitted, as by LXX. The clause in the Hebrew text follows 'mine uncle's son,' the of Hanamel mine uncle's son, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. And I subscribed the 10 deed, and sealed it, and called witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. So I took the deed of the 11

E.V. has transposed it to improve the sense. We should follow the LXX also in omitting 'the money, even.'

10. The description which follows has given rise to a good deal of discussion, which it is unnecessary to record here since the true explanation seems to have been furnished by the discovery of deeds in Babylonia and Assyria of the same type as that here described. In his *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, Contracts, and Letters*, Dr. Johns has given an account of the method commonly pursued in executing deeds: 'As to external form, most of those which may be called "deeds" consist of small pillow-shaped, or rectangular, cakes of clay. In many cases these were enclosed in an envelope, also of clay, powdered clay being inserted to prevent the envelope adhering. Both the inner and outer parts were generally baked hard; but there are many examples where the clay was only dried in the sun. The envelope was inscribed with a duplicate of the text. Often the envelope is more liberally sealed than the inner tablet. This sealing, done with a cylinder-seal running on an axle, was repeated so often as to render its design difficult to make out, and to add greatly to the difficulty of reading the text' (pp. 10, 11). See also Jeremias, *The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East*, vol. ii, p. 281: 'The clay tablet was wrapped in another layer, and upon the outer cover of clay the contents were inscribed together with the names of the witnesses, and the seal was rolled upon it also.' We have here then the same mode apparently followed, the deed 'which was open' was the outer case containing a copy of the deed itself which was sealed up within it. The Hebrew text may have been glossed, but legal language is proverbially redundant, and it gives a more faithful representation than the LXX, which has been preferred by several who were not aware of the facts mentioned above. The object of repeating on the envelope the terms of the deed was that the latter might be preserved from any interference, so that if at any time a dispute arose, if the writing on the envelope was in any degree obliterated or there was a suspicion that it had been tampered with, the case might be broken and the deed itself consulted. Even to the present day, Dr. Johns tells us, 'When the envelope has been preserved unbroken, the interior is usually perfect, except where the envelope may have adhered to it' (loc. cit., p. 11).

11. The LXX reads simply, 'And I took the deed of the pur-

purchase, both that which was sealed, [a]*according to* the law
12 and custom, and that which was open: and I delivered
the deed of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah,
the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel mine
uncle's *son*, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed
the deed of the purchase, before all the Jews that
13 sat in the court of the guard. And I charged Baruch
14 before them, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God

[a] †Or, containing *the terms and conditions*

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chase which was sealed,' the rest of the verse being omitted. Several modern scholars accept this text, and get rid of the double deed. It is true that in the next verse we read of 'the deed of the purchase,' as if there were only one. But, in the light of what has been already said, it will be seen to be quite natural that the same deed might be spoken of in the singular or in the plural, according as it was contemplated as a whole or in its separate parts. There is no thought of two separable documents, but of two combined together. At the same time it is not unlikely that the clause following 'that which was sealed' should be omitted. The margin is preferable to the text, though 'containing' is not expressed in the Hebrew; but the suggestion that the deed itself, which was sealed up, contained anything which was not on the envelope contradicts the legal custom already described, according to which the envelope was inscribed with an exact and complete copy of the deed itself. The words may have originated out of a mistaken repetition of the preceding words, or they may be a gloss. If the latter, they are presumably technical terms. Literally they mean 'the command and the statutes.' The former term is taken by Driver as the injunction 'bidding the seller cede possession of the property;' others translate 'the offer,' explaining this to mean the description of the field. The latter term probably means the conditions of purchase.

12. Baruch: here for the first time mentioned in the book, which we so largely owe to his pious care. He had for long acted as the prophet's amanuensis.

mine uncle's son. The Hebrew simply reads 'my uncle,' but the word for 'son of' has been accidentally omitted; it is read by the LXX, Syriac, and about ten Hebrew MSS. (see note on 7).

in the presence . . . the guard. The care taken that all the legal formalities should be observed is to be noticed, as well as the full-sounding legal phraseology in which it is recorded.

14. The Hebrew is clumsy and redundant, but this may be due of Israel: Take these deeds, this deed of the purchase, both that which is sealed, and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel; that they may continue many days. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the 15 God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land.

Now after I had delivered the deed of the purchase 16 unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD, saying, [S] Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the 17

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to the adoption of legal phraseology. Even the LXX recognizes here the open deed in addition to that which was sealed up, and thus attests the fact which it has previously obliterated.

an earthen vessel. The Babylonian and Assyrian deeds were frequently 'stored in pots of unbaked clay. The pots, as a rule, have crumbled away, but they kept out the earth around' (Johns, loc. cit., p. 12). Here Baruch stores the deed 'for many days,' since it will be a long time before the sign receives its fulfilment. In times of disturbance it was customary to bury things for safe custody; the earthen vessel served this purpose very well.

16-25. This prayer of Jeremiah is in the main a later insertion, as Stade was the first to point out, and as many (including even Findlay) have since recognized. Stade regarded 24, 25 as summarizing Jeremiah's actual prayer, 17-23 being added at a later time. These verses are largely a mosaic of phrases we meet with elsewhere in the book and in Deuteronomy, and they closely resemble the prayer in Neh. ix. 5-38. The long introduction 17-23 is out of proportion to the prayer itself in 24, 25. Moreover the confession of Yahweh's omnipotence in 17 is strange in view of the question which is put to the prophet in 27 as an answer to his prayer. Accordingly we should probably treat 17-23 as late. But it by no means follows that we should accept Duhm's view that 24, 25 should be judged similarly. These verses are quite suitable to the situation, and Jeremiah may well have uttered them, in spite of the height his faith had just reached.

17. The invocation begins with the confession of Yahweh's might as displayed in creation (17), then passes to His mercy and retribution and names His great name (18), then affirms His all-seeing scrutiny of human conduct, that each may receive his deserts (19). From these universal relations of Yahweh, we pass to His special relation to Israel, beginning with the wonders wrought in Egypt at the Exodus (20, 21) and the entrance of Israel on the possession of Canaan (22), and then confessing the

heaven and the earth by thy great power and by thy
stretched out arm; there is nothing too [a] hard for thee:
18 which shewest mercy unto thousands, and recompensest
the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children
after them: the great, the mighty God, the LORD of
19 hosts is his name: great in counsel, and mighty in work:
whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of
men; to give every one according to his ways, and
20 according to the fruit of his doings: which didst set
signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this
day, [b] both in Israel and among *other* men; and madest

[a] Or, *wonderful* [b] Or, *and*

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disobedience which has brought this calamity upon the people (23). We have thus a beautiful and well-ordered description of Yahweh's attributes and work as the later theology described it.

thy stretched out arm: see note on xxvii. 5. In 21 it is used in its more usual connexion with a great act of Divine deliverance.

hard. The word is used of what lies outside the usual course of nature or events; often it bears the meaning 'wonderful,' but 'hard' is preferable here. The LXX gives an inferior text 'hidden from thee.'

18. unto thousands. The reference is clearly to the Decalogue (Exod. xx. 6, Deut. v. 10), the text of which has become so familiar that the author quotes it in this abbreviated, allusive form in the confidence that the reader will supply the rest. The passage means that God shows mercy to thousands who belong to those who love Him. Thus while the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation, the principle of solidarity works on a far vaster scale in the bestowment of reward for love of God and observance of His commandments.

into the bosom. The folds on the bosom of the Oriental robe served as a pocket; it was large enough for infants (Num. xi. 12) or lambs (Isa. xl. 11) to be carried in it. For the phrase 'to recompense into the bosom' cf. Isa. lxv. 6, Ps. lxxix. 12.

19. For the end of the verse see note on xvii. 10.

20. Cf. Deut. vi. 22, Neh. ix. 10.

even unto this day. This is difficult, since obviously the 'signs and wonders' in Egypt ceased at the Exodus. Perhaps the simplest expedient is to read 'and unto this day.' The expression is in any case somewhat loose. Cornill thinks it means

thee a name, as at this day; and didst bring forth thy 21
people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and
with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched
out arm, and with great terror; and gavest them this 22
land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give
them, a land flowing with milk and honey; and they 23
came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy
voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing
of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou
hast caused all this evil to come upon them: [J] behold 24
the mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and
the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans that
fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine,
and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is
come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou 25
hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for

'which are celebrated unto this day,' but suggests that 'in the land of Egypt' may be a gloss.

21. Cf. Deut. iv. 34, xxvi. 8. The 'terror' is the dread struck into Egypt and the surrounding nations by the judgements of God on Egypt and the wonders He wrought for His people at the Exodus: cf. Exod. xv. 14–16; Deut. ii. 25; Joshua ii. 9–11, v. 1.

22. Cf. xi. 5. The theme of this verse and the following is to be found in a very expanded form in Neh. ix. 22–35.

23. Cf. xi. 8.

24. the mounts: cf. vi. 6, xxxiii. 4; 2 Sam. xx. 15; 2 Kings xix. 32; Isa. xxxvii. 33; Ezek. iv. 2, xvii. 17, xxvi. 8. These were earthen embankments from which the storming parties made their assaults. This verse (if Jeremiah's) favours the view that when the purchase of the field took place the siege had been resumed.

is given: a perfect of certainty; the meaning is not that the Babylonians had already captured the city, but that they would undoubtedly do so, aided as they were by the famine and plague which were decimating the defenders.

25. It would be too prosaic to object that God had not said this; Jeremiah had understood Him to mean this by the request his cousin had made. The LXX after 'money' has an addition. It reads: 'So I wrote the deed, and sealed it, and called witnesses.' This may be the original text.

money, and call witnesses; whereas the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, say-

26–44. We have now the answer of Yahweh to Jeremiah's prayer. That it is, as a whole, a later composition lies almost on the surface. It is largely irrelevant to the situation. We have an announcement of Yahweh's intention to destroy Jerusalem on account of the sins of the people from its earliest days (28–35). But this had for long been the theme of Jeremiah's preaching, and had the section occurred in one of his own addresses to the people it would, so far as its general contents go, and its expression, have seemed quite suitable. But that in answer to his question as to the purchase of the land Yahweh should be represented as communicating to Jeremiah what for many years the prophet had been saying, and express it in the same language as he had been using, is not easily reconcilable with the authenticity of these verses. They are a late insertion put together, presumably by the editor, out of Jeremianic phrases. These objections do not lie to the same extent against 36–44. They are relevant to the question which the prophet has laid before God, and are less conventional in style. At the same time there are features which are difficult to harmonize with the actual situation of Jeremiah. In 36, according to the Hebrew text, the people ('ye say') and not Jeremiah merely, speak of the city as given into the hand of the king of Babylon, though this does not seem to have been their belief at the time. But the LXX 'thou sayest' should probably be accepted, and the verse is then free from objection. Verse 43 seems to presuppose that the exile had already taken place, and 37 looks for a return from a wide dispersion. It is difficult, accordingly, to regard the whole passage as dating from the tenth year of Zedekiah. But if the prayer in 24, 25 was uttered by Jeremiah in the circumstances recorded, it is natural to conclude that the answer belongs to the same time. An answer to the question he lays before Yahweh is given in 43, 44, and there is no substantial reason for disputing the authenticity of the latter verse, though, as we have seen, 43 apparently reflects a later situation. But with this we should take 26, 27, which form a necessary introduction. Even so 44 is rather abrupt. The present writer is therefore inclined to think that, while 28–35 is wholly editorial, the rest of the section is substantially Jeremianic, but committed to writing in its present form after the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the captives had taken place. Even the reference to the dispersion is not necessarily impossible on Jeremiah's lips: cf. xxiii. 3, 7, 8, xxiv. 9.

26. unto Jeremiah: read, with the LXX, **unto me.**

ing, Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is 27
there any thing too hard for me?

[S] Therefore thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will 28
give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into
the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he
shall take it: and the Chaldeans, that fight against this 29
city, shall come and set this city on fire, and burn it,
with the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered
incense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto
other gods, to provoke me to anger. For the children 30
of Israel and the children of Judah have only done that
which was evil in my sight from their youth: for the
children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with
the work of their hands, saith the LORD. For this city 31

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27. This verse has been anticipated by 17 (see notes), but it is quite suitable to the situation, and we should rather infer that 17 is secondary than pass this judgement on both alike.

28. The introductory formula, 'Therefore thus saith the LORD,' would be in place in an address by the prophet; it is quite unsuitable in an answer given by Yahweh Himself to the prophet. The opening sentence is an expansion of 3: the LXX simply reproduces that verse.

29. Cf. xix. 13, xxi. 10.

30. The reference to the sin of Israel alongside of the sin of Judah, while not strictly relevant to the threat of judgement on the latter, may pass, since the writer is looking back on the whole history of the people. But the verdict, while it does not absolutely contradict ii. 2, inasmuch as the early days in Canaan might be regarded as still belonging to the nation's youth, agrees better with Ezekiel's estimate than Jeremiah's: cf. Ezek. xx. 5–26. The second half of the verse is absent from the LXX, and the reference to 'the children of Israel' favours the omission. If it is used in the same restricted sense as in the former part of the verse, the omission of Judah is unaccountable, since the writer is concerned especially with it. If, however, it includes the southern as well as the northern tribes, it is difficult to think that the writer would use the designation in such different senses in consecutive clauses.

31. The passage reads as if the author thought that the Israelites built Jerusalem. It is hardly credible that he did so; the expres-

hath been to me a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day;
32 that I should remove it from before my face: because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of
33 Jerusalem. And they have turned unto me the back, and not the face: and though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened
34 to receive instruction. But they set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to defile it.
35 And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto Molech; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my [a] mind, that they should do this abomination; to cause Judah to sin.

36 [J] And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of

[a] Heb. *heart.*

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sion is loose. Probably he is under the influence of Ezekiel's description of the heathen origin of Jerusalem (Ezek. xvi. 3–6). According to this prophet, it well maintained a character harmonious with this origin after the Israelites gained possession of it. It is interesting to see how the writer passes to and fro from city (28, 29, 31) to people (30, 32, 33).

32, 33. For 32^a cf. xi. 17; for 32^b, 33^a cf. ii. 26, 27; for 33^b cf. vii. 13, 25, xxv. 3, 4.

34, 35. These verses are largely identical with vii. 30^b, 31 (see the notes). We have in that passage 'the high places of Topheth,' and 'to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire.' Further, it concludes with 'neither came it into my mind.' On Molech see the note on vii. 31 (vol. i, p. 155). Our passage agrees with xix. 5 in speaking of 'the high places of Baal' (see vol. i, p. 237).

36. The opening words can hardly be in their original form, since Yahweh would not speak of Himself in this way (see note on 28). 'Therefore' is also inappropriate in this connexion, but it

Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It is given into
the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the
famine, and by the pestilence: Behold, I will gather them 37
out of all the countries, whither I have driven them in
mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and
I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause
them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and 38
I will be their God: and I will give them one heart and 39
one way, that they may fear me for ever; for the good of
them, and of their children after them: and I will make 40
an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn
away [a] from them, to do them good; and I will put my

[a] Heb. *from after them.*

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is unobjectionable when 28-35 have been removed. It is a little curious that this verse should begin to speak of the city, and that in 37 we should pass abruptly to the people in the dispersion.

ye say: see the note on 26–44 (p. 122). The LXX 'thou sayest' harmonizes with 24; the Hebrew seems to have been assimilated to xxxiii. 10.

37. Giesebrecht suggests that originally 42 stood before 37–41. For 37^a cf. xxiii. 3, and for the last clause cf. xxiii. 6.

38. Cf. xxxi. 33.

39. The LXX reads 'another way and another heart;' the difference between 'one' and 'another' in Hebrew is infinitesimal, and it is impossible to say with certainty which is the original. We may compare Ezek. xi. 19, 'And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you;' the parallel passage Ezek. xxxvi. 26, however, reads 'A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.' It is on the whole probable that we should retain the Hebrew here. All hearts would be of one accord to adopt the same way of life, and that the way along which God called them to walk. For the rest of the verse cf. Deut. iv. 10, vi. 24.

40. and I will . . . with them: cf. Isa. lv. 3; Ezek. xvi. 60, xxxvii. 26. The term 'new covenant' is not actually used, but the same thing is meant; and the latter part of the verse expresses the same thought as xxxi. 33^b in another form. The fear of God is implanted by God Himself in the heart, that they may not go astray from Him.

I will not turn away from them. As the margin says, the

fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.
41 Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will
plant them in this land [a] assuredly with my whole heart and
42 with my whole soul. For thus saith the LORD: Like as
I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will
I bring upon them all the good that I have promised
43 them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye
say, It is desolate, without man or beast; it is given into
44 the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields for

[a] Heb. *in truth.*

Hebrew means 'from after them.' Giesebrecht finds this surprising, since elsewhere the people is represented as following Yahweh, not Yahweh as following the people. Accordingly he suggests 'I will not cease from having compassion upon them.' Cornill justifies the present text by a reference to Deut. xxiii. 14 (Heb. 15), where we read 'that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from after thee.' And, as he points out further, Giesebrecht's emendation eliminates the antithetic parallelism with 'they shall not depart from me' at the close of the verse.

to do them good. If these words belong to the true text, it would be better to omit the comma before them, and connect closely with the preceding clause, the sense being that Yahweh will not cease from following them to do them good. But they are absent from the LXX and are best omitted, especially as we have not only had a similar clause in 39, but have practically the same words in 41, from which the insertion in our verse has probably been made.

41. The former part of the verse is perhaps modelled on Deut. xxviii. 63: cf. xxx. 9; Isa. lxii. 5, lxv. 19; Zeph. iii. 17.

I will plant them: cf. xxiv. 6, xxxi. 27, 28.

with my whole heart and with my whole soul. The only case in which this expression is used with reference to God.

42. This repeats in another form the thought of xxxi. 28.

43. This verse seems to presuppose that the exile had been already accomplished, so that the land lies desolate. At the same time, according to the Hebrew text, the verse was written in Palestine ('this land'), so that its Jeremianic origin is very dubious; it would be easier to accept it if, with the LXX, we read 'the land.' For 'ye say' the LXX, as in 36, reads 'thou sayest,' but the grounds for accepting it here are less cogent than in 36.

44. For the districts enumerated in this verse see note on xvii. 26, where there is a similar enumeration but in a somewhat different money, and subscribe the deeds, and seal them, and call witnesses, in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the hill country, and in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

[R] Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jere- 33

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order. Here 'the land of Benjamin' stands first, since the field Jeremiah had bought was situated in it. The fullness of detail is noticeable also in the mention of the legal formalities accompanying a sale.

xxxiii. RENEWED PROMISES OF RESTORATION AND BLESSEDNESS.

This section is closely connected with xxxii, and, like it, raises serious critical problems. The chapter falls into two main divisions: (a) 1–13, (b) 14–26. The latter is omitted in the LXX, and its Jeremianic authorship is surrendered by most recent scholars. The evidence of the LXX is here very weighty. We can see no sound reason why the translator should have omitted the passage if it had been in his Hebrew text; it is therefore likely that it is a very late addition. The omission has been explained as due to its numerous repetitions of passages found elsewhere, and the non-fulfilment of the prophecies with reference to David and his family and the Levites. But the translator does not make a practice of striking out repetitions (see vol. i, p. 68), and if he had omitted promises which in his time had not been fulfilled, his handling of the book would have been drastic indeed. The fact that promises had not been fulfilled did not mean that their fulfilment would never come. The Jews of the post-exilic period turned with peculiar interest to the glowing prophecies of future happiness which stood in such inviting contrast to their unhappy state; their temptation was not to eliminate but to add such passages. The repetitions which the passage contains are not favourable to its authenticity, nor yet the prominence given to the Levitical priests, which has no parallel in Jeremiah's own writing.

The former part of the chapter (1–13) has been very generally accepted as Jeremiah's, apart from 2, 3. Duhm regards 1–13 as late, and is followed by Cornill, so that these scholars recognize nothing as Jeremiah's in xxxii, xxxiii beyond xxxii. 6-15. Schmidt independently assumes much the same position. This position we have not been able to adopt with reference to xxxii, and the case with xxxiii. 1–13 is similar. We should probably recognize a Jeremianic basis which has been worked over by the editor.

miah the second time, while he was yet shut up in the court
2 of the guard, saying, [S] Thus saith the LORD that doeth

Even in its present form, however, it is earlier than 14–26, which from its absence in the LXX we must infer to be one of the latest elements in the book.

xxxiii. 1. This is the second revelation which came to Jeremiah in the court of the guard.

2, 3. Yahweh, the accomplisher of His purpose, says: Call and I will answer, and disclose unknown secrets.

4–9. The houses are being broken down to form defences against the assaults of the Chaldeans, but the slain of Yahweh will be many. Yet Yahweh will heal His people, restore Israel and Judah, cleanse them from all their guilt, and make Jerusalem so glorious that the nations will fear.

10–13. Once more the land now desolate shall ring with rejoicing, and life will be resumed in all its fullness as of yore. All over the country there shall be the homesteads of shepherds, guarding their flocks.

14–18. In the days to come Yahweh will raise up a righteous shoot to David, who shall reign as a righteous King over Judah and Israel, and his name shall be 'Yahweh is our righteousness.' For David shall never fail of a successor on the throne of Israel, nor the Levitical priests of one to offer sacrifice.

19–22. If Yahweh's covenant with day and night should be broken, then it may be broken with David and with the Levitical priests. As the stars cannot be numbered nor the sand measured, so shall the seed of David and the Levites be multiplied.

23–26. In answer to the complaint that Yahweh has cast off His people, He affirms that only when day and night cease, or the ordinances of heaven and earth, will He cast away the seed of Jacob, or the house of David.

xxxiii. 1. See note on xxxii. 2.

2, 3. On account of their Deutero-Isaianic phraseology, Movers and Hitzig assigned these verses to the Second Isaiah. Graf rejected this, as he rejected the similar treatment of xxx, xxxi, but he admits that 'they make the impression that they are an insertion by a later hand.' This judgement has been accepted by a large number of scholars. Their elimination of it was of course bound up with the probably correct view that 1–13 was as a whole the work of Jeremiah. Naturally if the whole section is late, as Duhm thinks, there is no necessity to regard 2, 3 as an insertion. The reference to what follows as things previously unknown does not suit the contents of 4–13, since they do not contain anything beyond what may be found in xxxi, xxxii.

that doeth it. If the text is right, there may be an allusion

it, the LORD that formeth it to establish it; the LORD is
his name: Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and will 3
shew thee great things, and [a]difficult, which thou knowest
not. [J] For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, con- 4

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[a] Heb. *fenced in*.

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to Isa. xxii. 11 (this passage seems to have been in the author's mind: cf. 4, 5 with Isa. xxii. 10), where we have (in the Hebrew) the same indefinite mode of reference, 'that had done it,' 'that fashioned it,' i. e. His purpose. But the text here is otherwise not free from objection; and the LXX reading, 'who made the earth and formed it to establish it,' is to be preferred: cf. Isa. xlv. 18. The word 'to form' is frequently used in II Isaiah in parallelism with 'make;' for 'Yahweh is his name' cf. 'Yahweh of hosts is his name,' Isa. xlvii. 4, xlviii. 2, li. 15, liv. 5, but also Jer. xxxi. 35, xxxii. 18, and the creation passages in the Book of Amos (iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 6) which many scholars consider to be late. In Jer. x. 1–16, a passage which also has marked affinities with II Isaiah, we find the same turn of phrase in a context which emphasizes the thought of Yahweh as the Creator, 'for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name' (x. 16).

The third verse is closely parallel to Isa. xlviii. 6b: 'I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, which thou hast not known.' It is not unlikely that, as several scholars following Ewald believe, we should, with some Hebrew MSS., read 'hidden' for 'difficult' here, the two words differing only by a single consonant (i. e. *n*^{e}*tsuroth* for *b*^{e}*tsuroth*). The word rendered 'difficult' means 'inaccessible,' but it is used elsewhere of cities.

4, 5. The historical situation here reflected is the time of the siege as indicated in 1, so that the verses may well be Jeremiah's. But the passage is very difficult in its present form, and unquestionably corrupt. Graf, in spite of his loyalty to the Hebrew text, closes his long enumeration and discussion of the various suggestions made with the words 'One must renounce a restoration and satisfactory explanation of the plainly corrupt passage' (p. 418). The reference to the houses is itself strange, since we do not hear that they were destroyed because on their roofs idolatrous sacrifice had been offered (xix. 13, xxxii. 29), which would have formed a good contrast with the restoration of the city, but simply of their destruction to furnish materials for the defence (cf. Isa. xxii. 10), for which the kings' houses would not have been expected to be employed. But, apart from this, the present text is impossible, as indeed is clear from the R.V. 'They come' cerning the houses of this city, and concerning the houses

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obviously cannot refer to the houses, yet that is the grammatical sense. Even if we strain the words to mean the inhabitants, we not only do unjustifiable violence to the language, but we do not gain a good sense. The writer should have said 'They go out,' and there is no point in the mention of the houses. If this sense had been intended, it should have been expressed in a much simpler way, such as 'the houses of this city . . . against the swords. And their inhabitants go out to fight,' &c. The easiest expedient is to omit the particle rendered 'with,' and translate 'The Chaldeans are coming to fight.' This gets rid of the difficulty caused by the apparent reference in 'They come' to the houses, and 'come' is the appropriate verb for the attack of the besieging party. It is still surprising in view of the fact that the introduction suggests an oracle specially devoted to 'the houses,' that there is no reference to them specifically in the sequel, though the bringing of new flesh on the city (6) is a figurative way of saying that her breaches are made good. Such breaches, however, are in the main those caused by the enemy when the city had been captured, not those made by the defenders. The other attempts to restore the passage to its original form do not seem any more satisfactory. Duhm omits all after 'broken down' to 'Chaldeans,' and points the next word differently and gets the sense 'which are broken down and filled with the dead bodies,' &c. He supposes that the author of this insertion took objection to the statement that the houses were broken down while the city was still uncaptured and added these words as an explanation. The insertion itself is emended by him 'for the mounts and bulwarks, when they began to fight with the Chaldeans.' This very clever restoration is open to criticism in detail, but it is too violent to inspire confidence, and the mounds are not represented elsewhere as used for defence but only for attack. Cornill suggested a radical reconstruction in the *Sacred Books of the Old Testament*, and has virtually repeated it in his commentary: 'which are broken down, against which the Chaldeans come with mounds and swords to fight and to fill with the dead bodies,' &c. This gives a fairly satisfactory sense, but it is secured at the cost of rearranging and to some extent rewriting the passage. But, like Duhm's suggestion, it does not remove the difficulty previously mentioned, that the houses receive a prominence when the subject-matter of the oracle is announced which is not justified by the sequel. The present writer is accordingly driven to the view that the difficulty has been created not by insertion but by accidental omission; he suspects that several words have fallen out after 'broken down' or possibly after 'sword,' and that the attempt to restore sense to the passage thus mutilated has possibly led to further corruption.

of the kings of Judah, which are broken down *to make
a defence* against the mounts, and against the sword: They 5
come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with
the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger
and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid
my face from this city. Behold, I will bring it [a] health and 6
cure, and I will cure them; and I will reveal unto them
abundance of peace and truth. And I will cause the cap- 7
tivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and
will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them 8
from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against
me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they
have sinned against me, and whereby they have trans-
gressed against me. And *this city* shall be to me for 9

[a] Or, *healing*

Presumably the oracle dates from a time when the siege had been renewed and houses were pulled down to strengthen the defence; and affirmed that though this had happened, and the Chaldeans were coming to heap high the dead bodies of the victims of Yahweh's wrath, yet He would bring back fresh flesh to heal the wound of Zion.

6. health: rather **fresh flesh:** see note on viii. 22.

cure them: several read 'cure her,' which may be attested by the LXX, though the clause is in a different place and may be an insertion in its text.

abundance. If the text is correct we must suppose that the word, which does not occur elsewhere in this sense, is an Aramaism. But the versions do not confirm the reading, and the text is probably corrupt. Rothstein suggests 'abodes' (*lāh m^{e}ʿōnōth* for *lāhem ʿăthereth*), but Duhm's suggestion 'treasures' (*ʿăthidoth* as in Isa. x. 13) is nearer the Hebrew and suits 'reveal' admirably, since 'treasure' is usually something which is hidden.

peace and truth: i. e. peace and stability; but perhaps we should read, as in xiv. 13, 'peace of truth,' i. e. assured peace.

7. as at the first: i. e. before the disruption of the kingdom; the reigns of David and Solomon are probably in the writer's mind: cf. Isa. i. 26.

8. Cf. xxxi. 34, Isa. iv. 4, but especially Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

9. Cf. xiii. 11. The emotion aroused in the nations by the exaltation of Zion is apparently one of dread, just as the wonders of

a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and
10 for all the peace that I procure unto it. [S]Thus saith the LORD: Yet again there shall be heard in this place, whereof ye say, It is waste, without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and
11 without beast, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that say, Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and of them* that bring *sacrifices of* thanksgiving into the house of the LORD. For I will cause the captivity of the
12 land to return as at the first, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Yet again shall there be in this place,

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the Exodus period struck terror into Egypt and the peoples of Canaan: see on xxxii. 20, 21. It is possible that pleasure rather than dread is intended (cf. Isa. lx. 5), but improbable.

10, 11 presuppose that the Fall of Jerusalem has taken place, and that the land has been laid waste. The opening clauses of 11^a contain the reversal of what we read in vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxv. 10. The liturgical formula, 'Give thanks . . . for ever,' is frequent in the later Psalms. This in itself would not necessarily stamp our passage as late; it is, indeed, quite possible that the formula may have been ancient, but if so we should have expected to find it in the earlier psalms. The reference to the thanksgiving offering is almost identical with a similar reference in xvii. 26, which is a late passage (see pp. 225, 226). And the repetition of 7 in the last clause, though in a briefer form, is strange.

12, 13. The same situation as in 10, 11. The verses remind us of xxxi. 2–6, and are partly identical with xvii. 26, xxxii. 43, 44 (see the notes). The writer, as he looks on the wasted country, sees it in imagination once more dotted with the shepherds' homesteads, and the flocks reclining at noon (Song of Songs i. 7) or passing along as their keepers count them to see that none is missing. The idyllic picture would have been congenial to Jeremiah's tastes and ideals; it is questionable, however, whether we really owe it to him.

which is waste, without man and without beast, and in all
the cities thereof, an habitation of shepherds causing their
flocks to lie down. In the cities of the hill country, in the 13
cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South, and in
the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem,
and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks again pass under
the hands of him that telleth them, saith the LORD.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will per- 14
form that good word which I have spoken concerning the
house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah. In 15
those days, and at that time, will I cause a [a] Branch of right-
eousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute
judgement and righteousness in the land. In those days 16
shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely:
and this is *the name* whereby she shall be called, The
LORD is our righteousness. For thus saith the LORD: 17
[b] David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of
the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites 18
want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to

[a] See ch. xxiii. 5. [b] Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David.*

14–16. This passage is largely repeated from xxiii. 5, 6, on which see vol. i, pp. 260–2, with a touch introduced from xxix. 10. Very remarkable, however, is it that the name 'Yahweh is our righteousness,' which Jeremiah assigned to the Messiah, is here transferred to the city.

17. The prediction of the permanence of the Davidic dynasty has reference to the future; at the time when the passage was written the monarchy had fallen.

18. the priests the Levites: i. e. the Levitical priests. This is the phrase used by Deuteronomy and in other literature earlier than the Reformation under Nehemiah. It is probable that this passage was written after the distinction between priests and Levites had been established by the acceptance of the Priestly Legislation. If so, the writer avails himself of the archaic mode of expression, which indicated that all the members of the tribe of Levi were entitled to act as priests. This verse is written from a standpoint very different from Jeremiah's.

to offer . . . continually. The burnt-offering was wholly

19 burn [a] oblations, and to do sacrifice continually. And
20 the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus
saith the LORD: If ye can break my covenant of the day,
and my covenant of the night, so that there should not be
21 day and night in their season; then may also my covenant
be broken with David my servant, that he should not have
a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the
22 priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be
numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will
I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites
23 that minister unto me. And the word of the LORD came
24 to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people

[a] †Or, *meal offerings*

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made over to God; the oblation was the vegetable offering; the sacrifice was used for a feast, of which the offerer and his friends partook, though a portion of course was given to God: see note on vii. 21 (vol. i, p. 151).

20–26. The passage is closely parallel to xxxi. 35, 36, and probably an imitation of it. The Hebrew for 'my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night' is suspicious; if it is correct, as in view of the late origin of the passage it may be, the meaning is apparently the covenant which Yahweh has made with day and night. Possibly we should read 'the covenant' for 'my covenant,' which would restore a regular construction; Duhm thinks the point is that day and night make a covenant with each other, to observe their own season, but this is questionable.

21. For this covenant with David see 2 Sam. vii. 16, 1 Kings ii. 4.

22. Cf. Gen. xv. 5, and for a closer parallel xxii. 17. The comparison is expressed in loose terms, but the meaning is clear. It is remarkable that a prophecy originally spoken of the whole people should here be applied to the royal and priestly families.

24. This verse is difficult. The 'two families' are probably not the house of David and the house of Levi, though the preceding verses have spoken of these, but in accordance with 26 (as in Ezek. xxxv. 10), Israel and Judah. 'This people' according to usage should refer to Israel (i.e. the whole people including both 'families'), but if we read 'before them' at the end of the verse, it would follow that a heathen people is intended. It is therefore probable that, with some versions, we should read 'before me.' A

have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.
Thus saith the LORD: If my covenant of day and night 25
stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven
and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, 26
and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will [a]cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them.

[B] The word which came unto Jeremiah from the 34

[a] Or, *return to their captivity*

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still better sense is given by Duhm's emendation, 'he hath cast them off, and despiseth his people, that it should be no more a nation before him.'

25. Cf. 20. A verb would be expected in the first clause to correspond to 'have appointed.' Duhm has made the very attractive suggestion that we should make a very slight alteration in the word rendered 'my covenant' (*bārā'thī* for *bᵉrīthī*), reading 'If I have not created day and night.' Cornill and Rothstein accept it. If it is original it was naturally assimilated to 20 by some scribe.

26. Duhm and Cornill strike out 'of Jacob, and;' the omission is favoured by the sequel which speaks of 'his seed;' but is not necessary.

xxxiv. 1–7. JEREMIAH WARNS ZEDEKIAH OF THE DISASTER WHICH AWAITS CONTINUED RESISTANCE TO BABYLON.

We now resume the biographical portion of the work, which was of course partially resumed in xxxii. The incident recorded in this section took place probably before the interruption of the siege by the relief army from Egypt, in which the second incident recorded in this chapter falls (21, 22). We may infer from 2 that Jeremiah had not yet lost his liberty. The narrative is quite trustworthy, though possibly mutilated to some extent (see note on 4).

xxxiv. 1–3. When Nebuchadnezzar and his hosts were fighting against Jerusalem and its cities, Jeremiah was sent to warn Zedekiah that Jerusalem would be taken and burnt by the king of Babylon, and he himself would be confronted with the victor and taken to Babylon.

Lord, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all
his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth that were
under his dominion, and all the peoples, fought against
Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying:
2 Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Go, and speak
to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the
Lord, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the
3 king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire: and thou

4–7. Yet he should not die by the sword but in peace, with the customary royal burnings and lamentations. So Jeremiah declared this message to Zedekiah, when Babylon was warring against Jerusalem, Lachish, and Azekah, the only cities that remained uncaptured.

xxxiv. 1. Since in 7 we have a fairly precise indication of the time, it is likely that this verse is largely editorial; had Baruch written it he would have inserted here the information he gives in 7. This conclusion is confirmed by the somewhat bombastic style, though the LXX gives us an abbreviated form.

2. Duhm thinks the first part of the verse is editorial, and that Baruch would simply have said 'Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, Thus saith,' &c. His reason is that Jeremiah would not be one of those who had access to the royal presence at any time. It is hardly likely, however, that a prophet of Jeremiah's standing would have found any difficulty in approaching the king, if he went to deliver the word of Yahweh to him. For the latter part of the verse cf. xxi. 10, xxxvii. 8–10, xxxviii. 23.

3. Cf. xxxii. 4, 5. Duhm infers from Baruch's silence as to the blinding of Zedekiah and the execution of his sons that they are unhistorical. He thinks that the king succeeded in establishing his personal innocence at his interview with Nebuchadnezzar, and since Jehoiachin was not used very badly, Zedekiah may have escaped anything worse than imprisonment for life. But we should rather argue, If Jehoiachin, who was personally innocent of his father's rebellion, was taken into captivity and languished in prison through the whole of Nebuchadnezzar's long reign, how should we expect Zedekiah to be treated by a suzerain to whom he owed his throne, when he violated his solemn oath of allegiance, the breach of which he had previously meditated? We may make allowances for the king's difficult position, but we cannot acquit him of serious blame. Ezekiel condemned his action in the strongest terms (Ezek. xvii. 1–21). And his testimony to the blinding of Zedekiah should settle the question: 'and I will bring him to

shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to
Babylon. Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah 4
king of Judah: thus saith the LORD concerning thee,
Thou shalt not die by the sword; thou shalt die in 5
peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former kings which were before thee, so shall they [a] make a burning for thee; and they shall lament thee, *saying*, Ah
lord! for I have spoken the word, saith the LORD. Then 6

[a] See 2 Chron. xvi. 14, xxi. 19.

Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there' (xii. 13).

4, 5. These verses raise a serious problem. The most obvious interpretation is that although Zedekiah will have to go to Babylon, he will not be executed but die in peace, and all the wonted honours paid to Jewish kings at their death will be paid to him. But as Hitzig, with the full approval of Graf and some of the best among recent expositors, forcibly argued, such a mitigation by Jeremiah of the consequences of rebellion would be in direct opposition to his invariable attitude and the impression he desired to make. It was also hardly in harmony with the event, for the almost idyllic description of peaceful death and honourable burial would not have prepared the king for the bereavement he suffered and the blinding he had personally to endure. But since Jeremiah could not have said to the king, 'You will have to go into captivity, but matters will not be so bad after all,' we must regard this as a conditional promise. If the king surrenders unconditionally he shall retain his throne till his death, and then be honoured as his predecessors had been. Of course the text in its present form does not say this, but we should rather attribute this to the loss of a few words, than to the unskilful style of the narrator. The beginning of 4 suggests in fact that a contrast to the course the king was pursuing should follow.

with the burnings . . . for thee. The reference is to the burning of sweet spices at the funeral of a king, not to the cremation of the corpse, for this was buried, not burned (see 2 Chron. xvi. 14, xxi. 19). It would be better to read, with LXX, Syr., Vulg., 'as at the burnings.'

Ah lord! See note on xxii. 18.

Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah
7 king of Judah in Jerusalem, when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and against Azekah; for these *alone* remained of the cities of Judah *as* fenced cities.

8 The word that came unto Jeremiah from the Lord,

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7. The LXX omits 'all' and 'that were left;' it would give a better sentence if we omitted the whole clause, reading simply 'against Jerusalem, against Lachish,' &c. Presumably a scribe added after 'Jerusalem' the familiar 'all the cities of Judah;' then a later scribe, observing how incongruous this was, since only two were involved, corrected the text into its present form. Lachish is to be identified with Tell el-Hesy, which is about thirty-five miles south-west of Jerusalem. It was a strongly fortified place, which was occupied by Sennacherib as his base during his campaign in 701 B.C. Azekah has not yet been identified; according to Joshua xv. 35, 1 Sam. xvii. 1, it was in the Shephelah, not far from Socoh: it seems to have been a fortress in the south-west of Judah, about fifteen miles from Jerusalem.

xxxiv. 8–22. Condemnation of the Re-enslavement of Hebrew Slaves in Violation of Oath.

The general situation is fairly clear, but the passage presents some difficulties. During the earlier part of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem, Zedekiah induced his people to liberate their Hebrew slaves. When, however, the siege was raised on account of the relief expedition from Egypt, they forced back into bondage the slaves whom they set free. Their cynical perfidy was aggravated by a blasphemous perjury. For the edict of emancipation was not merely a civil proclamation, it was an oath sworn with all the solemnities of religion, and thus placed under the protection of Yahweh. The human wrong would in any case have excited the prophet's burning indignation; but their shameless violation of the sanctities of religion, this flouting of their God to His face, involved them in a still deeper condemnation. The narrative, however, as it stands is very incomplete. No indication is given as to the motive of their conduct. Duhm supposes that the emancipation rested simply on political grounds, and had nothing to do with the Law or religion. During the siege the slaves were of no use to the inhabitants, since they would normally be engaged in the fields outside the walls, and now that the city was invested they were a burden on the food-supply. By their action they had fewer useless mouths to feed, and perhaps enlisted some more free after that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with

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men for the defence of the city. When the siege was raised the work in the fields could be resumed, so that the slaves again became of service. The impression made by the narrative, however, is not that emancipation was purely prudential and selfish, but that in itself it was a boon to the slaves, which on Duhm's interpretation it could hardly have been. It is much more probable that it was intended as such, not of course out of disinterested motives, but because by such a costly surrender the masters hoped to win the help of Yahweh against Babylon. When the siege was raised, they thought, with characteristic optimism, that the danger was over, and there was no need to leave their former slaves in enjoyment of their liberty now that the granting of it had secured what they wanted.

The denunciation of their conduct in 13 ff. creates a difficulty, in that it connects the release of the slaves with the law that Hebrew slaves were to be released in the seventh year (Exod. xxi. 2, Deut. xv. 12). But this law seems to be irrelevant to the action here recorded. For the law provided for release at the end of six years dating from the beginning of the individual's servitude, so that there was no fixed point of time when all the slaves would be released, but the occasion for release might fall at any time. But the act of which we read in this chapter was a simultaneous emancipation of all the Hebrew slaves, quite irrespective of the term of service. Now it is quite probable that the law had for a considerable time been disregarded, and that many had been in servitude for longer than six years. But it is also probable that the term fixed by the law had in many cases not expired. It is therefore a plausible inference that the reference to the law is due to an editor. It is possible, however, that the emancipation was undertaken in obedience to the neglected law; and that to make their action even more effective, and perhaps atone for their earlier disregard, they decided to emancipate all their slaves without waiting till the legal term had expired. A death-bed repentance, with the usual sequel on recovery!

xxxiv. 8–11. Zedekiah made a covenant with the people of Jerusalem to release their Hebrew slaves. The princes and people agreed and released them, but afterwards re-enslaved them.

12–16. Jeremiah reminds them that their fathers had disobeyed the law bidding them release their Hebrew slaves in the seventh year; they had themselves, however, made a covenant in the Temple before Yahweh to let the slaves go free, and then brought them back into bondage.

17–22. Since then they have disobeyed His command to set their brethren free, Yahweh will set them free to fall a prey to sword, plague, and famine, and make them a consternation to all

all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim
9 liberty unto them; that every man should let his manservant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve him-
10 self of them, *to wit*, of a Jew his brother: and all the

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nations. And those who made the covenant, by cutting the calf in twain and passing between the pieces, shall be given up to their enemies; and their carcasses shall be food for bird and beast. And Zedekiah and his princes will be given to the Babylonian army. For though it has left Jerusalem Yahweh will bring it back, and it will capture and burn the city.

xxxiv. 8. The verse gives the date of the oracle inexactly, for it was after the breach of faith had been committed that Jeremiah's denunciation was uttered.

to proclaim liberty unto them. 'Unto them' should probably be omitted, as by LXX. The reference should be to the people, but apparently the sense is not that the proclamation of release should be communicated to the people, but that freedom should be announced to the slaves. The word rendered 'liberty' is unusual, and is not found in the earliest legislation or in Deuteronomy, though in Lev. xxv. 10 it is employed with reference to the year of Jubilee: see also Ezek. xlvi. 17, Isa. lxi. 1.

9. The number of Hebrew slaves is explained by the conditions of the time. The old peasant proprietors had been largely exterminated in the wars; the heavy tribute and taxation had ruined the poorer people; wealth had accumulated in comparatively few hands, and had been employed in luxury and other barren expenditure; so that the poor, seeing no alternative but starvation, had been forced to sell their children and then themselves into slavery. In the earlier period the relation between masters and slaves seems to have been friendly and humane; but in the capitalist era which had supervened, class distinctions would be aggravated and the old personal ties would to a large extent have given place to the point of view we associate with slavery.

that none . . . his brother. The clause is very clumsy in the Hebrew. The LXX gives 'so that no one of Judah should any more be a slave.'

10, 11. Here also the LXX has a briefer text: 'And all the princes and all the people, which had entered into the covenant that every one should let his manservant and every one his maidservant go free, turned and brought them into subjection for manservants and maidservants.' It is a moot question whether this represents a more original text than the Hebrew, since it is

princes and all the people obeyed, which had entered
into the covenant, that every one should let his man-
servant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that
none should serve themselves of them any more; they
obeyed, and let them go: but afterwards they turned, 11
and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they
had let go free, to return, and brought them into sub-
jection for servants and for handmaids: therefore the 12
word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD,
saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: I made 13
a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought
them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of
[a] bondage, saying, At the end of seven years ye shall let 14
go every man his brother that is an Hebrew, which
[b] hath been sold unto thee, and hath served thee six
years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your
fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their

[a] Heb. *bondmen*.

[b] Or, *hath sold himself*

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possible to explain the omission in the LXX by the passing of the scribe's eye from 'free' in 10 to 'free' in 11 (so Giesebrecht); or, assuming that the Greek text is the original, the change of 'turned' at the beginning of 10 into 'obeyed' may have occasioned the expansion into the present Hebrew text (so Duhm, Cornill). The latter is perhaps the more probable.

13, 14. The law is quoted, though freely, according to the form in Deuteronomy (xv. 12) rather than the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxi. 2), and the time designation 'at the end of seven years' seems to come from Deut. xv. 1 which introduces a law on a different subject, 'the year of release.' It is interesting that the Deuteronomic Law can be referred to as given on the day that Israel left Egypt (see note on vii. 22).

13. I made. The pronoun is emphatic. There is a contrast with the emphatic pronoun 'ye' at the beginning of 15.

14. At the end of seven years: cf. Deut. xv. 1 (see above). We should say at the end of six years, since this is clearly indicated in the course of the verse. The LXX reads 'six,' and may, of course, be right in doing so; but other examples may be quoted from the Old Testament of a similar usage to what we find here; just as the French say 'quinze jours' for our 'fourteen days.'

15 ear. And ye were now turned, and had done that which
is right in mine eyes, in proclaiming liberty every man
to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before
16 me in the house which is called by my name: but ye
turned and profaned my name, and caused every man
his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom ye had
let go free at their pleasure, to return; and ye brought
them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and
17 for handmaids. Therefore thus saith the LORD: Ye have
not hearkened unto me, to proclaim liberty, every man
to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold,
I proclaim unto you a liberty, saith the LORD, to the
sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will
make you to be [a] tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms
18 of the earth. And I will give the men that have trans-

[a] †Or, *a terror unto*

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17. Now follows the sentence. They have been disobedient to Yahweh in not emancipating their slaves at His bidding; therefore He emancipates them, dismisses them from His service. But they will not be masterless; sword, pestilence, and famine will be their new masters. For the closing words of the verse see note on xv. 4.

18–20. The text is inexact and redundant; it is probably to some extent in disorder and disturbed by glosses. The LXX has a briefer text. Duhm strikes out a good deal, including all reference to the calf. If, however, there is anything in the passage which is authentic, it is the reference to the ceremony of passing between the pieces of the calf. Duhm quite unwarrantably rejects the representation that the agreement to emancipate the slaves was placed under the sanction of religion. Certainly the disavowal of the proclamation would have been very reprehensible had it been merely a civil act; but it gave a still darker colour to it that they had placed their oath under the protection of their God (15) and ratified it by an ancient religious rite. It is very difficult to believe that any editor is responsible for this valuable piece of information. The precise restoration of the passage is a matter of much less moment; Giesebrecht reconstructs 18, 19 as follows: 'And I will give up the men that passed between the parts of the calf, the princes of Judah and the princes of Jerusalem, the

gressed my covenant, which have not performed the words
of the covenant which they made before me, [a] when they
cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof;
the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the 19
eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land,
which passed between the parts of the calf; I will even 20
give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the
hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies
shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to
the beasts of the earth. And Zedekiah king of Judah 21
and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies,
and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into

[a] Heb. *the calf which they cut &c.*

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eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people.' The ceremony is familiar to us from Gen. xv. 10, where we read that Abraham divided the heifer, the she-goat, and the ram in two, and laid each half opposite each other, and when the sun went down 'a smoking furnace and a flaming torch' passed between the pieces (17), Yahweh thus making a covenant with the patriarch. The significance of the ceremony is often supposed to be that the contracting parties invoked on themselves the fate which had befallen the victims if they broke the covenant (cf. 1 Sam. xi. 7). But the essence of the rite is the cutting of the victim in two pieces and passing between them, and this is not very relevant to such an imprecation. It is more probably a mystical rite: the parties to the covenant are united by being taken within the life of the same sacred victim. It is thus allied to a covenant sacrifice in which the parties eat of the same victim, or to the less attenuated rite of blood-licking, in which the union is directly reciprocal and not mediated through a third party.

18. my covenant: i.e. the Deuteronomic Law previously mentioned; 'the covenant,' i.e. the agreement to emancipate the Hebrew slaves.

when they cut the calf. The margin gives the literal translation of the Hebrew text, which can hardly be right. The R.V. text implies a slight transposition.

20. and into the hand of them that seek their life. Probably to be omitted, with the LXX, both here and in the following verse.

21. The incidental reference to the raising of the siege is obviously authentic; it supplies the explanation of the breach of faith, which is strangely omitted in the narrative itself.

the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone
22 up from you. Behold, I will command, saith the LORD,
and cause them to return to this city; and they shall
fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and
I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without
inhabitant.

35 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD

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22. As they have caused their slaves to return (11), so Yahweh will cause their besiegers to return and consummate the destruction of the city.

XXXV. THE FIDELITY OF THE RECHABITES AND THE DISOBEDIENCE OF THE JEWS.

In this chapter we are suddenly transported to the reign of Jehoiakim, if we can trust the evidence of the title. Erbt rejects it, and dates the incident in the reign of Zedekiah. It is in favour of this view that the historical situation requires a date after Jehoiakim's rebellion against Babylon, since it was the Babylonian and Syrian armies which had compelled the Rechabites to come into Jerusalem (11: cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 2). The incident accordingly falls some years after the burning of the roll and Jehoiakim's attempt to have the prophet arrested. It is argued that so long as Jehoiakim was on the throne it would have been unsafe for Jeremiah to come out of hiding (xxxvi. 19, 26). But probably the king, after an interval, had decided to carry the matter no further (see vol. i, p. 20). The reference to the Syrian army suits the reign of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 2), and we should probably accept this as the true date and assign it to 598 B. C. or thereabouts.

This narrative gives us our fullest information about the Rechabites. They were a branch of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55); and from the account given of Jonadab their ancestor, we can see that he was a zealous sympathizer with Jehu, who destroyed the house of Ahab with atrocious bloodshed. His sympathy was enlisted, since he was a fanatic for what he took to be the pure worship of Yahweh. Some scholars consider that the worship of Yahweh was originally derived from the Kenites, among whom Moses dwelt after his flight from Egypt. The religion of Israel, which was at first a wilderness religion, was profoundly transformed by the settlement in Canaan. The nomad became a tiller of the soil. He learnt the art of agriculture from the Canaanites. This included not merely the right mode of cultivating the land, but also the right mode of winning the favour of the supernatural powers who in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah,

could grant or withhold their blessing on his toil. Each district had its Baal, and success in agriculture was dependent on the favour of these local Baalim. The Hebrews combined the worship of the Baalim with that of Yahweh, without feeling that they were thereby compromising their duty of sole allegiance to their national God. Yahweh and the Baalim did not stand for them on the same plane, any more than many monotheists would feel that God and the saints were on the same plane, though both might be objects of worship. There was, however, a radical distinction between Yahweh and the Baalim, in that the cult of the latter was associated with revolting licentiousness. Moreover, owing to the fact that the term 'baal' meant 'lord' or 'owner,' it could be, and was, used quite innocently of Yahweh Himself. And, as time went on, the Hebrews began to think of Yahweh as the lord of the land and the giver of fertility. These two factors combined to contaminate with the foul rites of Baalism the worship of Yahweh Himself. At last a definite protest was made by Jonadab the son of Rechab. He strictly forbade his descendants to abandon the nomad life. They were not to build houses but to dwell in tents, they were to sow no seed and to plant no vineyard, and they were not even to drink wine. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the main stress was laid on total abstinence from intoxicating drinks, or that their movement was a protest against luxury. It was a protest against adopting the agricultural life, since this was in their judgement incompatible with perfect loyalty to their wilderness God, Yahweh. They could have been total abstainers and yet lived in houses and planted fields; nor, had they manufactured mead and drunk it, would they have been disloyal to the Rechabite ideal. More than two centuries had passed since Jonadab had laid his commands on his family, and during this period they had been faithfully observed. Only invasion had driven them to leave the open country for the security of the city. (See further on the subject of this paragraph the editor's *The Religion of Israel*, chap. ii, 'The Settlement in Canaan and Transformation of the Religion.')

The historical character of the incident itself is generally admitted. Schmidt constitutes an exception among recent writers. 'That Jeremiah should have praised for their loyalty the Rechabites whose very presence in Jerusalem constituted the severest infringement of the commandment enjoined upon them by their ancestor is quite incredible, apart from the questionable method used to test their fidelity to one of the ancestral injunctions, and the scene of this trial' (*Enc. Bib.* 2387). But it is a pure assumption that their presence in Jerusalem infringed the command of Jonadab, since they might still have pitched their tents within the walls. And

2 saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD,

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even if it had been, we may remember that the Maccabees, whose whole movement was inspired by fidelity to the Law, were nevertheless forced by the logic of bitter experience to fight on the Sabbath, though to maintain its sanctity was one of their most cherished desires (1 Macc. ii. 29–41). There was nothing really questionable, as Cheyne also urges with Schmidt, about Jeremiah's invitation to the Rechabites, provided he was well assured, as he would be, that it would certainly be refused. And no real difficulty is raised as to the place. Schmidt says that probably the story was intended to justify the elevation into some position in the lower clerus of those who had abandoned the nomadic life they were solemnly commanded to lead (ibid.). He thinks that the chapter may have originated in the Persian period, as the reorganization of the clerus would raise many questions of eligibility (loc. cit., 2391). That some Rechabites may not have remained faithful to the nomadic ideal is suggested, though not proved, by Neh. iii. 14, where we are told that Malchijah, the son of Rechab, participated in the repair of the gates of Jerusalem. Nor is the evidence that the Rechabites were incorporated in the lower ranks of the clergy at all strong. We have no solid reason for doubting the historical character of the story, but on the contrary we may readily recognize the presence in it of many features which cannot have been invented.

xxxv. 1–11. Yahweh commanded me in the days of Jehoiakim to take the Rechabites to a chamber in the Temple and give them wine. So I brought them there, and offered them wine. But they refused it, for Jonadab ben-Rechab, their ancestor, had commanded them not to drink wine, build houses, sow seed or plant vineyards, or possess any of these things, but to dwell in tents. They had strictly observed his commands, and had come to dwell in Jerusalem only because of the armies of the Chaldeans and the Syrians.

12–19. Yahweh bids the prophet ask the Jews if they will not receive the lesson. Jonadab's injunctions are obeyed, but the Jews have not paid heed to Yahweh or His prophets. So all the threatened evil will come on the Jews for their disobedience, but since the Rechabites have obeyed the behests of Jonadab, he shall not want a man to stand before Yahweh for ever.

xxxv. 1. in the days of Jehoiakim. On the correctness of this and the more precise date see the Introduction to the chapter (p. 144).

2. the house of the Rechabites: not the dwelling-house in which they were living, but the family, as in 3, 5, 18.

into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.
Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of 3
Habazziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the
whole house of the Rechabites; and I brought them into 4
the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of
Hanan the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was
by the chamber of the princes, which was above the
chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of

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the chambers. Of such chambers in the Temple courts there were many, used partly as storerooms, partly as official residences, partly for gatherings, especially no doubt for sacrificial feasts. They might be open or closed; Baruch was able to read the roll in the ears of all the people, while he was in the chamber of Gemariah. Here also we may assume that the chamber was open, since the lesson would be lost on the people, unless they were spectators of the scene. We may also conclude that it must have been a spacious room.

3. It is noteworthy that the names, one of which is identical with that of the prophet himself, are like that of Jonadab, all compounded with Yahweh. Jaazaniah was presumably the head of the clan.

4. The precision with which the situation of the chamber is described vouches for the historicity of the narrative. The Temple itself was destroyed not so long after.

the sons of Hanan. We do not know anything of Hanan, except that he was a 'man of God,' and the sense of this is not certain; he was perhaps a prophet. His 'sons' may have been literally such, or possibly his disciples; and from the fact that they placed their room at Jeremiah's disposal we may gather that they were in sympathy with him.

Igdaliah. The LXX and Syriac read Gedaliah, which should perhaps be adopted. It need hardly be said that this Gedaliah is not to be identified with the governor who was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Maaseiah: probably to be identified with the father of Zephaniah the priest (cf. xxi. 1, xxix. 25, xxxvii. 3). He was 'the keeper of the door' or more correctly of the threshold, to which great sanctity was attached in antiquity (see Trumbull's *The Threshold Covenant*). From lii. 24 (= 2 Kings xxv. 18) we learn that there were three of these functionaries; apparently they ranked after the second priest.

5 the [a] door: and I set before the sons of the house of the
Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups, and I said unto
6 them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no
wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor
7 your sons, for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow
seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days
ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the
8 land wherein ye sojourn. And we have obeyed the voice
of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he
charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives,
9 our sons, nor our daughters; nor to build houses for us to
dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:
10 but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done

[a] Heb. *threshold.*

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5. The **bowls** were large vessels, from which the wine would be served into the **cups.**

6. Jonadab the son of Rechab. We meet with him in 2 Kings x. 15, 16, 23. Jehu found in him a hearty sympathizer in the atrocities with which he extirpated the house of Ahab and the worship of the Tyrian Baal, Melkart. Jonadab was no doubt inspired simply by a 'zeal for Yahweh' which Jehu indeed claimed, though in his case ambition was only too evident. It must, of course, be remembered that the worship of the Tyrian Baal stood on quite a different footing from the worship of the local Baalim, since it involved the recognition of a foreign deity as standing on the same level as Yahweh. But an ardent Yahweh-worshipper like Jonadab would naturally be vehemently opposed to the cult of the Baalim and the worship of Melkart; both infringed the monopoly of Yahweh. For the meaning of the prohibitions see the Introduction to this chapter. A close parallel is quoted by Graf and others from Diodorus Siculus (xix. 94), who says with reference to the Nabataeans: 'They have a law, neither to sow corn, nor plant any fruit-bearing plant, nor to use wine, nor to build a dwelling-house.' The reason assigned, however, was the preservation of freedom from subjugation. The penalty for violation of the law was death. Bennett quotes from Scott's *Legend of Montrose*, 'Son of the Mist! be free as thy forefathers. Own no lord—receive no law—take no hire—give no stipend—build no hut—enclose no pasture—sow no grain.'

according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.
But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Baby- 11
lon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let
us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans,
and for fear of the army of the Syrians; so we dwell at
Jerusalem.

Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, 12
Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Go, and 13
say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words?
saith the LORD. The words of Jonadab the son of 14
Rechab, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine,
are performed, and unto this day they drink none, for they
obey their father's commandment: but I have spoken
unto you, rising up early and speaking; and ye have not
hearkened unto me. I have sent also unto you all my 15
servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them,
saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and
amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve
them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given
to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your
ear, nor hearkened unto me. Forasmuch as the sons of 16

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11. Cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

12. The narrative suggests that the interview with the Rechabites ended at this point, and that Jeremiah then received the Divine message and was told to go and deliver it to the people. But no special revelation was needed to enforce the lesson of the scene which had just been enacted; and its effect would have been largely lost if there and then he had not driven it home. The address which follows is largely of the conventional type. Erbt probably goes too far in leaving 16, 19 as its only authentic portion, but it seems to have suffered considerable editorial expansion. For 13 cf. ii. 30, vii. 28, xvii. 23, xxxii. 33; for 14^b cf. vii. 13, xi. 7, xxxii. 33; for 15 cf. vii. 3, 7, 25, 26, xi. 8, xviii. 11, xxv. 3-7, xxvi. 5, xxix. 19, xxxiv. 14; for 17 cf. xix. 15.

Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father which he commanded them, but
17 this people hath not hearkened unto me; therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have
18 not answered. And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done
19 according unto all that he commanded you; therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever

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18, 19. The LXX diverges a good deal from the Hebrew: Duhm and Cornill prefer the former, but consider it a late insertion; Giesebrecht prefers the latter. The LXX reads 'Wherefore thus saith Yahweh, Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have obeyed the command of their father, and done as their father has commanded, there shall never fail a man to the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab to stand before me all the days of the earth.'

19. Jonadab . . . for ever. 'To stand before Yahweh' means to minister to Him. It is used with reference to Jeremiah himself (xv. 19: see note); to Moses and Samuel, as powerful in intercession. But it is specially used of priestly and Levitical functions. It would be too much to infer with any confidence that the passage is intended to justify the incorporation of some of the Rechabites into the ranks of the inferior clergy (see the Introduction to this chapter). It is true that we meet with a reference in Hegesippus' account of the martyrdom of James to 'one of the priests of the sons of Rechab, the son of Rechabim, who are mentioned by Jeremiah the prophet' (*Hist. Eccl.* ii. 23), but it is questionable if much weight can be attached to this. For identifications with descendants of the Rechabites by Benjamin of Tudela, Wolff, Pierotti, and others, the Bible Dictionaries may be consulted.

And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the 36

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xxxvi. The Writing, Public Reading, and Burning of the Roll.

We now approach one of the most noteworthy chapters of the book, since it gives us very important information as to the origin of Jeremiah's prophecies in their written form. We have already discussed it in the Introduction to the Commentary (vol. i, pp. 57–62), and need not here repeat what was said there. It may be added that Prof. Condamin has devoted an excellent article to this chapter, in the periodical entitled *Études* (issued by the Society of Jesus) for Jan. 5, 1911. This contains an annotated translation, and a discussion of the problems presented by the chapter.

xxxvi. 1–8. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Yahweh bade Jeremiah write all the words spoken to him concerning Jerusalem, Judah, and the nations from the time of his call, for Judah may on hearing them amend and be forgiven. So Baruch wrote them at his dictation. And since the prophet was prevented from entering the Temple, he told Baruch to read the roll to the people assembled in the Temple for a fast day, in the hope that they might entreat Yahweh and amend their ways, in view of His terrible threatening. So Baruch did as Jeremiah ordered him.

9–20. In the fifth year of Jehoiakim and the ninth month there was a fast, and Baruch read the roll to the people. Micaiah, having heard it read, went to the palace and told all the princes the contents of the roll. The princes sent Jehudi to bring Baruch with the roll. On his arrival he read it at their request. When they had heard it they were afraid, and told him that they must report the matter to the king. They asked him how he had written it, and he answered that it was at Jeremiah's dictation. They warned him that he and Jeremiah should go into hiding. Then they went to the king, leaving the roll behind them, and made their report to him.

21–26. The king sent Jehudi for the roll, and Jehudi read it to him and the princes in attendance. Whenever he had finished reading three or four columns, the king cut them with a penknife and burnt them on a brasier, and continued doing so till the roll was completely burnt. And no one was terror-stricken, though some vainly entreated the king not to burn the roll. Then he ordered Baruch and Jeremiah to be arrested, but Yahweh hid them.

27–32. Then Jeremiah was commanded to take another roll and rewrite the prophecies. And he must tell Jehoiakim, who had burnt the roll because it announced the destruction of the land by the king of Babylon, that he should have none to sit on the throne; his dead body should be flung forth unburied; he, his seed, and

son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came unto
2 Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee,

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his servants should be punished; they and all the people should suffer the evil that had been threatened. So Baruch wrote on another roll the words of the roll that had been burnt, and added many similar words.

xxxvi. 1. On the date see note on xxv. 1.

2. Graf has argued elaborately that up to this time Jeremiah had committed none of his prophecies to writing. Since he admits that he could not have reproduced his early prophecies from memory, he thinks that it is only the substance rather than the precise form which was reproduced, a task all the easier that the substance of his message was unaltered, and more suited to the practical purpose it was intended to serve than if he had exactly repeated the oracles directed to a different set of circumstances. But the actual phenomena of the book do not bear out Graf's view. Several of the early prophecies bear so unmistakably the marks of the time when they were originally uttered, and are so full of the prophet's youthful energy and fire, that we cannot regard them as compositions of some twenty years later. We should probably infer that Jeremiah had preserved in written form some of his oracles, but that in dictating to Baruch he did not feel himself bound to a literal reproduction when it seemed desirable to alter or expand to suit the new conditions. Stade's view that Jeremiah experienced a repetition of the prophetic ecstasy in which the prophecies were originally spoken, in order to repeat the oracles themselves, is quite unnecessary and unsupported by any tangible evidence.

against Israel. This can hardly be correct. The roll was of a threatening character, designed to bring Judah to repentance. What Jeremiah had said of the northern tribes was in the nature of promise, and was therefore unsuitable for the purpose of the roll as described in 3. We should read, with the LXX, 'Jerusalem' in place of 'Israel.' 'Against' is probably the best rendering, though we might translate 'concerning.'

and against all the nations. Duhm and Rothstein consider this an addition, later than xxv, and perhaps than xlvi li. But this is quite arbitrary, resting on the theory we have already seen occasion to reject (vol. i, pp. 77, 78), that Jeremiah was not a prophet to the nations.

from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be 3
that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which
I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every
man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity
and their sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of 4
Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah
all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him,
upon a roll of a book. And Jeremiah commanded 5
Baruch, saying, I am [a] shut up; I cannot go into the house
of the LORD: therefore go thou, and read in the roll, 6

[a] †Or, *restrained*

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3. Cf. xxvi. 3.

4. Baruch has appeared already in xxxii. 12. He was probably a secretary by profession, and a faithful adherent of the prophet. He seems to have been of high standing socially. He was the grandson of Maaseiah, who is described in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8 as the governor of the city, and the brother of Seraiah, who, according to li. 59, held an official position (what position is not clear: see the note), and went to Babylon on a mission in the reign of Zedekiah.

from the mouth of Jeremiah: i. e. at Jeremiah's dictation, but whether Jeremiah read any part of it or spoke entirely without manuscript is not indicated by this phrase.

5. I am shut up. This is a very unfortunate translation, since it suggests that Jeremiah was imprisoned, though it is clear from 19 that this was not the case. Several think that he could not enter the Temple on account of some ceremonial impurity. This is perhaps favoured by the term employed; but it is unlikely, since the actual reading did not take place till late in the following year (see 9), and it is unreasonable to suppose that the writing of the roll occupied the greater part of this interval; nor have we any suggestion elsewhere that Jeremiah suffered from any long-standing condition of this kind. At a later period in the reign he took the Rechabites to the Temple (xxxv), and was therefore free at that time from any such disability. It is more likely that the exclusion from the Temple is to be connected with the incident recorded in xx–xxi. 6. The authorities had probably forbidden him to speak there again. If we could place 9 before this verse, there would be no difficulty in the other view, since it might happen that on the fast day Jeremiah was in a condition of ceremonial uncleanness. But this would be a somewhat arbitrary expedient.

6. It is not clear whether we should read 'on the fast day' or

which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the
LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon
[a] the fast day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears
7 of all Judah that come out of their cities. It may be [b] they
will present their supplication before the LORD, and will
return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger
and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this
8 people. And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to
all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in
the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

9 Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the
son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, that all
the people in Jerusalem, and all the people that came from

[a] †Or, *a fast day* [b] Heb. *their supplication will fall.*

'on a fast day;' but from the statement in 9 we gather that it was not a fixed fast day, but one specially appointed on which the reading took place. If the verses are in the right order, the margin is accordingly to be preferred. Jeremiah chose a fast day on account of the large numbers that would be collected from the cities of Judah as well as from the capital, and the chastened and more receptive mood in which the people would be.

7. If their supplication falls before Yahweh (see margin), He will be constrained to take notice of it.

for great . . . this people: cf. 2 Kings xxii. 13, Josiah's words when he heard the book of the Law read.

8. This verse gives in summary form what is told at length in the following verses.

9. For **the fifth year** the LXX reads 'the eighth year,' which has not the slightest claim to acceptance. The delay till the fifth year is difficult enough to understand, but that the reading should be postponed three years longer is quite incredible. The ninth month was a winter month, embracing parts of November and December; the weather was often cold (cf. 22) and wet (cf. Ezra x. 9).

all the people . . . proclaimed a fast. This is the more generally accepted rendering, though some (including Rothstein and Condamin) translate 'they summoned to a fast all the people.' This fast was apparently not held on a stated fast-day but was specially summoned, probably in connexion with the political situation.

the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem, proclaimed a fast before the LORD. Then read Baruch in the book the words 10
of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house, in
the ears of all the people. And when Micaiah the son of 11
Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book
all the words of the LORD, he went down into the king's 12
house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there, even Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and

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10. The precision with which the locality is defined is evidence that the account proceeds from an eye-witness, no doubt Baruch. Gemariah was one of the sons of Shaphan, who held the very important post of secretary under Josiah, and read to him the Book of the Law which Hilkiah had discovered. If this Shaphan is to be identified with the Shaphan mentioned in xxvi. 24, Gemariah was the brother of Ahikam, Jeremiah's powerful protector, and uncle of Gedaliah. He was, we may assume, friendly to Jeremiah, since his chamber was placed at Baruch's disposal.

the upper court: probably to be identified with 'the inner court' mentioned in 1 Kings vi. 36, vii. 12. For 'the new gate' see note on xxvi. 10.

11. Micaiah had apparently been left in charge of Gemariah's chamber, while the owner was at the council of princes, if we are to identify the Gemariah in 10 with the Gemariah in 12. Possibly his father had instructed him to report to the council if anything should be said or done that called for official notice.

12. he went down: the palace being lower than the Temple; contrast xxvi. 10.

Elishama the scribe. If the designation 'the scribe' in 10 is to be attached to Gemariah, who would thus have succeeded his father Shaphan in the office, we should either have to suppose that he had been superseded by Elishama, or that there were two secretaries. More probably 'the scribe' in 10 is the designation of Shaphan, so that Gemariah, while a member of the council of princes, did not hold the post of secretary. The secretary's chamber was attached to the palace rather than the Temple, as is natural with a State official.

Elnathan the son of Achbor was sent by Jehoiakim to procure Uriah's extradition from Egypt. (The note on xxvi. 22 should be consulted.)

Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of
13 Hananiah, and all the princes. Then Micaiah declared
unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch
14 read the book in the ears of the people. Therefore all
the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of
Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take
in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears
of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah
15 took the roll in his hand, and came unto them. And they

Gemariah the son of Shaphan: probably (though some question this) to be identified with the Gemariah of 10.

all the princes: i. e. all the other princes. It is curious that the same phrase should be used twice in the same sentence with a different application.

14. Jehudi . . . Cushi. It is very surprising that a subordinate official should have his ancestry mentioned back for three generations. It is rare for even the grandfather to be mentioned, though it might be done, as in the case of Micaiah (11), where the grandfather was a person of distinction, or perhaps to avoid confusion where several bore the same name. It is noteworthy in this case that the first and last are not individual but national names, 'Jew' and 'Cushite.' Hitzig infers that Cushi was an Ethiopian who had been naturalized as a Jew; his son and grandson bore names compounded with Yahweh, expressing their adhesion to His service; but only in the next generation was full Jewish citizenship possible, and this is expressed in the name Jehudi. This view is accepted by several scholars. On the other hand, the name Cushi is found in the genealogy of the prophet Zephaniah (Zeph. i. 1), though he can hardly have been a foreigner since he was the grandson of Hezekiah, probably the king of that name (this accounts for his genealogy going back to the great-grandfather). Duhm supposes that names of this kind are to be explained by circumstances. Cushi might be given to a son born during a journey to Ethiopia, or born of an Ethiopian mother; Jehudi to a son born after the father's return, to distinguish him from sons born abroad, or to distinguish the son of a Jewish mother from half-brothers born of a foreign mother. Cornill and Rothstein prefer to read 'Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, and Shelemiah the son of Cushi.' The alteration to our present text is thought to have been occasioned by the reflection that one messenger alone was wanted, and that in 21 Jehudi alone was sent. There is no evidence, however, to support this change of text, and the sending of two messengers is improbable.

said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So
Baruch read it in their ears. Now it came to pass, when 16
they had heard all the words, they turned in fear one
toward another, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell
the king of all these words. And they asked Baruch, 17
saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words
at his mouth? Then Baruch answered them, He pro- 18
nounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and
I wrote them with ink in the book. Then said the 19
princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah;

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15. Sit down. The courteous treatment accorded to Baruch is noteworthy. Some follow the LXX in pointing the word differently, rendering 'Read it again in our ears.' But this is to be rejected.

16. The princes are terrified at the contents of the roll, and feel that they must let the king know. Omit 'unto Baruch,' with the LXX; the words express the result of their deliberations among themselves.

17. at his mouth. These words should probably be omitted, with the LXX; they anticipate Baruch's answer.

18. Baruch's answer is intended to assure the princes that the whole roll was word for word Jeremiah's composition; he had simply performed the mechanical task of taking down the oracles as the prophet dictated them. It is remarkable that Jeremiah's name is not mentioned here, though in a formal statement of this kind it would be expected. We should read, with the LXX and Syriac, 'Jeremiah pronounced.'

with ink. The LXX omits the words, which occur here only, probably incorrectly. The detail would seem to Baruch worth mentioning. Giesebrecht reads 'with my hand;' Duhm's scoff that the princes would know that he had not written it with his foot is hypercritical, for Baruch might quite well have said 'I wrote them with my own hand,' to bring out that he alone had executed the mechanical part of the task (cf. Gal. vi. 11). But there is no need to alter the text.

19. The princes know the king too well, they had the fate of Uriah before them, to be in any doubt as to the reception he would accord to the prophet and his secretary. So they give Baruch timely warning that he and Jeremiah should go into hiding. It is a little remarkable that the king did not issue the order for their arrest as soon as the princes made their report, before he had the roll read to him.

20 and let no man know where ye be. And they went in to
the king into the court; but they had laid up the roll in
the chamber of Elishama the scribe; and they told all the
21 words in the ears of the king. So the king sent Jehudi to
fetch the roll: and he took it out of the chamber of
Elishama the scribe. And Jehudi read it in the ears of
the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood
22 beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house
in the ninth month: and *there was a fire in* the brasier
23 burning before him. And it came to pass, when Jehudi
had read three or four [a] leaves, that *the king* cut it with

[a] †Or, *columns*

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20. the court: i. e. the inner court. But this would be open, whereas according to 22 the king was in the winter house. Rothstein and Giesebrecht independently suggested 'into the cabinet,' which involves very slight change. This is accepted by Duhm and Cornill (see also Driver's note).

they had laid up the roll: probably hoping that the king might not ask for it, being content with the oral report they were going to make to him.

22. The fact that he was in the winter house is mentioned to account for the fire in the brasier, which plays so important a part in the story. The LXX rightly omits 'in the ninth month;' it is a gloss introduced from 9, to explain why the king was in the winter house sitting before the fire. The sense of the last clause is correctly given in the R.V., but, as the italics suggest, the Hebrew is unsatisfactory. It is, in fact, ungrammatical; the alteration of one letter (*'eth* into *'esh*, 'fire') gives the requisite sense. The brasier was placed in the middle of the room.

23. The R.V. does not bring out the meaning. It suggests that Jehudi read three or four leaves, and then, without hearing more, the king cut the whole roll to pieces and burned it. But 24 implies that the king heard the whole roll read. Driver's rendering brings out the sense, 'as often as Jehudi read three or four columns, he cut them.' Had he burnt the whole roll at once the knife would have been less necessary, since the roll could have been tossed on the fire as it was, unless indeed it was too large to burn readily in that way. As every three or four columns were read, he cut them off and burnt them and let the reading proceed. At the end of the process the whole roll was burned; the king found nothing to save from the fire.

the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brasier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brasier. And they were not afraid, nor rent their 24 garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Moreover Elnathan and Delaiah 25 and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them. And the king commanded Jerahmeel [a] the king's son, and 26 Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after 27

[a] Or, *the son of Hammelech*

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leaves. The margin **columns** is better. The word literally means 'doors.' A similar usage is found in Arabic and Rabbinical Hebrew.

the penknife: literally 'a scribe's knife.'

24. There is perhaps an intentional contrast with the conduct of Josiah when he heard the Law Book read (2 Kings xxii. 11).

25. On the attitude of Elnathan see note on xxvi. 22. The LXX inverts (with a difference in the names) the true sense of the verse.

26. the king's son: probably not the son of Jehoiakim, who was himself barely thirty at the time, but a prince of the blood.

but the LORD hid them. The LXX reads simply 'but they were hidden.' The Hebrew is finer; Baruch recognizes in these words that it was due to God's watchful care that their retreat was not discovered.

27–31. Duhm strikes out these verses as due to the redactor. Certainly, apart from the style, there are difficulties. The words of Jehoiakim in 29 were not really uttered by him to Jeremiah, since king and prophet did not meet. The prediction that he should have no successor on the throne was not absolutely true, since his son Jehoiachin did succeed him. But as he reigned only three months, and was then deposed and taken to Babylon, Jeremiah might well have expressed himself in this way; and the fact that it was not literally fulfilled tells against the view that it is an editorial insertion from xxii. 30. The quotation from the roll is not exact, but it agrees sufficiently with the tenor of Jeremiah's predictions. Erbt more moderately assigns 29–31 to an editor, Rothstein simply 29^b–30^a ('Thou hast burned . . . king of Judah').

that the king had burned the roll, and the words which
28 Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the
29 king of Judah hath burned. And concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD: Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from
30 thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the
31 night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced
32 against them, but they hearkened not. Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words.

37 [**R**] And Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned as king,

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30. On the closing threat see note on xxii. 18, 19 (vol. i, pp. 255–6).
32. On the second edition of the roll see vol i, pp. 61, 62.

xxxvii. 1–10. JEREMIAH WARNS ZEDEKIAH THAT THE CHALDEANS WILL RETURN AND BURN JERUSALEM.

This section gives us an account of a deputation sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah in the interval of relief from the siege occasioned by the coming of the Egyptian army, and the reply the prophet sent to the king. The relation of this narrative to that in xxi has been discussed in the Introduction to that chapter, to which the reader should refer (vol. i, p. 246). Here it need simply be said that the narinstead of [a] Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah. But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people 2 of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD, which he spake by the prophet Jeremiah.

[B] And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of 3

[a] See ch. xxii. 24.

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ratives probably refer to different incidents, xxi to an earlier, xxxvii. 1–10 to a later stage in the conflict. The present story is quite trustworthy and comes to us from the hand of Baruch, but 1, 2 are presumably editorial, and 3–10 may have been touched by the editor's hand.

xxxvii. 1, 2. Zedekiah was appointed by Nebuchadrezzar king in place of Coniah, but neither he nor his people gave heed to the message of Jeremiah.

3–10. Zedekiah sent to Jeremiah to entreat his prayers. Jeremiah had not yet been imprisoned, and the news that an Egyptian army was coming had caused the Chaldeans to raise the siege of Jerusalem. Jeremiah sends the answer to the king that the Egyptian army will return to Egypt, while the Chaldeans shall return and burn Jerusalem. Let them not deceive themselves with the delusion that they will abandon the siege. Nay, though the whole army contained none but wounded men, they would rise up and burn the city.

xxxvii. 1, 2. It is surprising to find this mention of Zedekiah's accession at this point in the book, as if he had not been mentioned before. The editor wishes to warn the reader that in the following narratives he is not, as in xxxv, xxxvi, concerned with the reign of Jehoiakim. This may perhaps account for the reading in the LXX, 'instead of Jehoiakim,' the meaning being not necessarily that Zedekiah was his immediate successor, but in the narrative that now follows the king is not Jehoiakim but Zedekiah. If the Hebrew text is original, a scribe may have struck out 'Coniah and' on account of the statement a few verses earlier (xxxvi. 30) that Jehoiakim should have 'none to sit upon the throne.' The statement in 2 is not an appropriate introduction to the king's request for prayer in 3.

3. The request is like that made by Hezekiah to Isaiah (Isa. xxxvii. 2–5). There is this difference: Hezekiah sent when matters seemed most desperate; Zedekiah when the raising of the siege had brought a reprieve. The reply of Jeremiah seems irrelevant to the request. It is rather an answer to such a question as, What is the issue to be? Will the Chaldeans abandon their enterprise?

Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the
priest, to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto
4 the Lord our God for us. [**R**] Now Jeremiah came in
and went out among the people: for they had not put
5 him into prison. [**B**] And Pharaoh's army was come
forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged
Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they brake up
6 from Jerusalem. Then came the word of the Lord
7 unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the Lord,
the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say to the king of
Judah, that sent you unto me to inquire of me; Behold,
Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall
8 return to Egypt into their own land. And the Chaldeans
shall come again, and fight against this city; and they
9 shall take it, and burn it with fire. Thus saith the

Possibly the prayer is understood to be an entreaty for direction rather than for deliverance, as 7 suggests; possibly the terms of the passage have been influenced by the account in Isa. xxxvii. 2–5. Jehucal appears a little later as one of Jeremiah's enemies (xxxviii. 1–6). On Zephaniah see notes on xxi. 2, xxix. 25. Erbt supposes that Jehucal has intruded into the text from xxxviii. 1, and that Pashhur has been transferred from xxxvii. 1 to xxxviii. 1. Thus we should have the same deputation as in xxi. 1. But if there were really two deputations, there is no reason why the members of it should have been the same. Jehucal's attitude in xxxviii. 1 is no warrant for removing his name here.

4. This verse may be editorial; in Baruch's memoirs the incidents would presumably be narrated in chronological order, so that it would be quite clear that the imprisonment had not yet occurred, whereas according to the present arrangement it is narrated in xxxii, xxxiii.

5. This comes at an inappropriate point: strictly it should have preceded 3. But the statement itself probably comes from Baruch. The Pharaoh mentioned is Pharaoh Hophra (590–571 B.C.); see note on xliv. 30.

7. We do not know why the Egyptian relief army retreated to Egypt. Perhaps it was intimidated at the approach of the Chaldeans, and yielded the ground without a struggle; perhaps, as Ezek. xxx. 21 suggests, it had suffered defeat.

9, 10. These verses are no mere addition made because the

LORD: Deceive not [a] yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart.
For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but [b] wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire. 10

And it came to pass that when the army of the Chal- 11

[a] Heb. *your souls*. [b] Heb. *thrust through*.

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redactor cannot bring himself to stop. They are expressed in so striking a way, and so apt to the self-deceiving optimism of the Jews, that we may be well assured that Jeremiah spoke them. So certain is the return of the Chaldeans and the destruction of the city, that if the Jews had smitten the whole army of the enemy, and only some desperately wounded (see margin) soldiers were left, they would rise up and burn the city. We should probably connect 'every man in his tent' with 'wounded men,' strike out 'among them,' and read with the LXX 'yet should these rise up.' The point of 'every man in his tent' is perhaps that out of several inmates of a tent, only one survivor was left. All that had happened so far was a mere strategic retreat, and already the hopes of the Jews were rising high; but 'things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be; why then should we deceive ourselves?' So settled in God's counsel is the city's fate, that even the most crushing defeat of its enemy could not save it from destruction at their hands.

xxxvii. 11–21. JEREMIAH IS ARRESTED AND IMPRISONED. ZEDEKIAH CONSULTS HIM AND AMELIORATES HIS LOT.

On this incident see vol. i, p. 25. The account is no doubt derived from Baruch's memoirs.

xxxvii. 11–15. When the Chaldeans had raised the siege of Jerusalem for fear of the relief army from Egypt, Jeremiah was going into the land of Benjamin, but was arrested by Irijah as a deserter to the enemy, in spite of his denial. The princes beat him and put him in prison.

16–21. After many days' confinement Zedekiah had him brought to the palace, and inquired if there was any message from Yahweh. Jeremiah told him that he should be delivered into Nebuchadrezzar's hands. He then remonstrated with him on account of his imprisonment, and pointed to the falsification of the predictions that the enemy would not come against Judah. He added a request that he should not be sent back to the prison to

deans was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's
12 army, then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go
into the land of Benjamin, to receive his portion [a] there,
13 in the midst of the people. And when he was in the
gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward was there, whose
name was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he laid hold on Jeremiah the prophet, saying,
14 Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah,
It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans; but he
hearkened not to him: so Irijah laid hold on Jeremiah,

[a] Heb. *from thence.*

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die there. So the king had him removed to the court of the guard, and supplied with bread.

xxxvii. 11. The interruption of the siege made it possible for Jeremiah to undertake his journey.

12. The precise object of his journey is uncertain, since the meaning of the Hebrew is not clear, perhaps through textual corruption, perhaps through its use of technical language which does not occur elsewhere. The R.V. gives what is probably the sense. The journey may be connected with an earlier stage of the same business as is recorded in xxxii, or he may have wished to get more money than he had, though at a later time he still had some, as we learn from xxxii. 9.

13. As he was in 'the gate of Benjamin,' on the north side of the city which led into Benjamite territory, he was arrested by the officer on duty, Irijah, a grandson of Hananiah, who is probably not to be identified with Jeremiah's antagonist (xxviii), since the latter was presumably a younger man. Nor are we to identify the Shelemiah here mentioned with the father of Jehucal (3). The charge of desertion was the more plausible that similar desertions seem to have been numerous (xxxviii. 19 : cf. 4, lii. 15); Jeremiah's advice to desert had perhaps already been given to the people (xxi. 9); and he had not concealed his conviction that the city must fall. This conviction was apparently shared by a good number, and there were probably many who strongly objected to the rebellion against Babylon. Those who were more outspoken, if they could not make good their escape, may have been thrust into prison.

14. Jeremiah indignantly denies the charge. On his attitude, and its consistency with the advice given to others to desert, see vol. i, pp. 24, 25.

and brought him to the princes. And the princes were 15
wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in
prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe; for they
had made that the prison. When Jeremiah was come 16
into the [a] dungeon house, and into the cells, and Jeremiah
had remained there many days; then Zedekiah the king 17
sent, and fetched him: and the king asked him secretly
in his house, and said, Is there any word from the LORD?
And Jeremiah said, There is. He said also, Thou shalt
be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.
Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, Wherein 18

[a] Or, *house of the pit*

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15. Irijah's arrest of the prophet may have been simply in obedience to his instructions. The decision as to his fate rested with the princes. These princes, it must be remembered, were not those of Jehoiakim's reign, who had been favourable to Jeremiah, since these had for the most part been taken to Babylon, but upstarts who had no experience of government, hot-headed and short-sighted patriots, so inferior in character to their predecessors that Jeremiah contrasted them with the latter as evil figs with good figs. They no doubt disliked him for his pro-Babylonian attitude; but they had been further embittered against him by his unsparing denunciation of the treatment they had accorded to their Hebrew slaves.

the house of Jonathan the scribe. Why this was used is not clear. Perhaps the other prisons were full, and a high official might be specially entrusted with such political prisoners as it was desired to keep under the strictest observation. As we gather from 16, Jeremiah was consigned to an underground dungeon, where he would have died in due course (20), had the princes had their way.

16. When. Read, with the LXX, 'And Jeremiah came,' and place a full stop at the end of the sentence.

cells: or 'vaults.'

many days. When he was removed the siege seems to have been resumed.

17. Zedekiah believed in the real inspiration of Jeremiah, and would have followed his counsel had he dared. But he was in terror of the princes, so he could consult the prophet only in secret (cf. xxxviii. 5, 24–27).

18–20. A simple and dignified remonstrance follows on his unjust

have I sinned against thee, or against thy servants, or
against this people, that ye have put me in prison?
19 Where now are your prophets which prophesied unto
you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against
20 you, nor against this land? And now hear, I pray thee,
O my lord the king: let my supplication, I pray thee,
[a] be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to
return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die
21 there. Then Zedekiah the king commanded, and they
committed Jeremiah into the court of the guard, and
they gave him daily a loaf of bread out of the bakers'
street, until all the bread in the city was spent. Thus
Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

38 And Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the

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[a] Heb. *fall.*

imprisonment; then he points the moral of the failure of the false prophets; and finally he proffers his petition that the king will not send him back to the dungeon, where death will be inevitable.

21. Jeremiah was innocent, and the king recognized this, yet he did not venture to set him free. But he so far braved the resentment of the princes as to bring him from the dungeon to the palace and confine him in the court of the guard (see note on xxxii. 2). He also took care for his maintenance, providing him a cake of bread daily. The round cake here indicated was only small, but bread was getting scarcer and scarcer, and it sufficed to keep him alive.

bakers' street. In the East those who practise the same trade or business often live in the same street.

xxxviii. 1–13. JEREMIAH IS PUT INTO A DUNGEON BY THE PRINCES, BUT RESCUED BY EBED-MELECH.

Schmidt pronounces this 'manifestly a late legend' (*Enc. Bib.* 2388), but critics generally, including Duhm, treat it as a trustworthy narrative from the pen of Baruch, even if to some extent edited.

xxxviii. 1–6. Four of the princes heard Jeremiah's words to the people, threatening death to those who stayed in the city, but promising life to those who surrendered, and predicting the capture of the city. They asked the king that he might be put to death, since he weakened the hands of the defenders of the city.

son of Pashhur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah, heard the words that Jeremiah spake unto all the people, saying, Thus saith the 2 LORD, He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey, and he shall live. Thus saith the LORD, 3 This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it. Then the 4 princes said unto the king, Let this man, we pray thee, be

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The king replied that he was in their hands, since the king had no power against them. So they put Jeremiah into a dungeon, and his feet sank in the mire.

7–13. Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a palace eunuch, heard of this, and told the king what had been done and that Jeremiah was in danger of speedy death. The king commanded him to get some men to draw him out of the dungeon. So he took rags and let them down to Jeremiah, and he put them under his armholes to cover the ropes. Then they drew him out of the dungeon and he remained in the court of the guard.

xxxviii. 1. Of the first two of the princes nothing further is known, except that Gedaliah, who is of course to be distinguished from the governor (xl, xli), might be the son of the Pashhur who beat Jeremiah and put him in the stocks (xx. 1–3). Jucal is the same as Jehucal of xxxvii. 3, and Pashhur accompanied Zephaniah on the first deputation sent by Zedekiah to the prophet (xxi. 1).

heard . . . people. Although Jeremiah was in confinement, he was not prevented from receiving visitors, as we see from the visit of Hanamel (xxxii); and to these, but especially to the soldiers who were on duty, he would have an opportunity of giving his view of the situation; perhaps more in reply to questions than as a propagandist.

2. This advice is that given also in almost the same words in xxi. 9 (see the note). Some, including even Köberle, hold that at this stage of the conflict Jeremiah would not have given such advice, though earlier he might have done so, and suppose that the passage has been inserted here from xxi. 9.

4. From their point of view, as men responsible for the defence of the city, they were not unjustified in demanding Jeremiah's death, for his unfaltering predictions of utter disaster were calculated to unnerve and discourage the defenders.

put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of
the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of
all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for
this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the
5 hurt. And Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your
hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing
6 against you. Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into
the [a] dungeon of Malchiah [b] the king's son, that was in
the court of the guard: and they let down Jeremiah with
cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but
7 mire: and Jeremiah sank in the mire. Now when Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, an eunuch, which was in the king's

[a] Or, *pit* [b] Or, *the son of Hammelech*

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5. Zedekiah apparently yields, but not fully: he leaves the prophet in their hands, but without permission to inflict the death penalty. He may have expected them to confine him again in the house of Jonathan. The LXX reports the king's reply as closing with 'hand;' the rest is a remark of the narrator, 'for the king was not able to do any thing against them.' This is perhaps correct.

6. The princes did not kill Jeremiah outright, perhaps they shrank with superstitious dread from such a deed; but they hit on a plan which they trusted might achieve their purpose as well. In the court of the guard there was a cistern belonging to one of the royal house (see on xxxvi. 26). It was usual for a house to have an underground cistern in which water was stored. In this cistern, as it happened, there was no water, but a deep miry sediment; and the prophet was lowered into this by cords, from which we may be sure no rags protected him, and his feet sank in the mire. It is clear from the sequel that the deed was done in the king's absence from the palace (7) and without his knowledge (9, 10).

7. It is very striking that the only one who intervenes to save Jeremiah from the terrible death the princes designed for him was an Ethiopian eunuch. Some think that the women of the harem, of whom he may have been in charge, had observed the proceeding, and informed Ebed-melech. But it is questionable whether the women's apartments would look on the court of the guard. Whether this was so or not, no sooner did he learn of it than he hastened to tell the king, who was in the gate of Benjamin (see xxxvii. 13), feeling it to be a matter of life and death.

house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon;
the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; Ebed- 8
melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to
the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done 9
evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet,
whom they have cast into the dungeon; and [a] he is like to
die in the place where he is because of the famine: for
there is no more bread in the city. Then the king com- 10

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[a] Heb. *he is dead.*

9. The LXX gives a different text in the former part of the verse: 'Thou hast acted wrongly in what thou hast done to slay this man.' This is accepted by Rothstein (in Kittel), but the Hebrew is much better; Zedekiah had not intended the prophet's death, and his answer to the princes was merely meant as a permission to silence him. It would have been tactless on Ebed-melech's part to accuse the king at a time when he was going to ask for his assistance.

and he is like . . . in the city. This is a very difficult passage. The Hebrew text reads 'and he has died;' it is better to omit a letter and read 'he will die,' than to impose an appropriate sense on the present text; or we might read 'to die' (so apparently LXX, but perhaps translating the present text). The last clause of the verse, if literally taken, gives no suitable meaning. If there was no bread in the city there was no point in the action of the princes, since famine would do their work for them; and for Ebed-melech to rescue him would only have been to doom him to a more lingering death. If there was no more food, he could be supplied with food as little in the court of the guard as in the cistern. But the words are obviously intended to give a reason why he should be rescued at once; so that we must rather interpret them as an exaggerated statement of the actual conditions. The point will then be that bread has become so scarce that in the pit in which he is confined Jeremiah will miss even his scanty ration (xxxvii. 21), which itself barely sufficed to keep body and soul together, and will die of hunger. Possibly the food in the city had been commandeered for distribution, so that the prophet's friends would have had no opportunity of helping him.

in the place where he is: better 'on the spot': cf. 2 Sam. ii. 23, where it is said of Asahel that he 'died on the spot.'

10. thirty men. The Hebrew is irregular and the number too large, even if so many could be spared from the ranks of the sorely thinned defenders (cf. 4, 'the men of war that remain'). We should read 'three men;' these, with Ebed-melech, would be

manded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from
hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the pro-
11 phet out of the dungeon, before he die. So Ebed-melech
took the men with him, and went into the house of the king
under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and
old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the
12 dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian
said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and
rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And
13 Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with the
cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah
remained in the court of the guard.

14 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the

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ample for the purpose. The king's language shows that he recognized the urgency of immediate action.

11. Ebed-melech's thoughtfulness to spare the prophet all needless pain is shown in his provision of rags to save him from being cut by the rope, and then by his letting the rags down to him with ropes that he might not have to grope for them in the mire. The rags he procured from a lumber-room under the treasury.

12. The LXX reads simply 'And he said, Put these under the cords, and Jeremiah did so.' Duhm prefers this, thinking that Jeremiah would sit on the rope and not be tormented by being pulled up with the cords under his armholes. But faint with hunger and ill usage, it was much better for him to be drawn up as the Hebrew text describes, than risk a fall from the rope as he was being raised; besides, had he sat on the rope, the provision of rags would have been a cruel refinement of kindness when time was so precious. The delay was worth while to protect the armpits.

13. The princes seem not to have interfered further with the prophet. Probably the end was already very near, and the king granted his petition not to be taken back to the house of Jonathan (26).

xxxviii. 14–28ᵃ. JEREMIAH'S FINAL APPEAL TO THE KING TO SURRENDER.

This narrative is taken from Baruch's memoirs, and is unquestionably trustworthy. Its information is too precise to come from any but a first-hand source. Probably the interview took place on the same day on which he was rescued by Ebed-melech. The prophet unto him into the third entry that is in the

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account which the king told him to give must have been plausible, or it would not have satisfied the suspicious princes. Had some delay intervened between the rescue and the interview, the dread that he might be sent back to his former prison would have been less natural; it was, however, the most natural thing in the world to anticipate that the princes, thwarted in their first attempt on Jeremiah, would avail themselves of the king's permission already accorded them (5) to send him back to the house of Jonathan, where he would no longer be able to weaken the defence. The narrative is told without any mention of Jeremiah's petition, so that the inference is suggested that the king simply invented the pretext of the petition in order to conceal the real purpose of the interview. But when we have regard to Baruch's mode of telling his story, this inference is by no means necessary. It is more than probable that Jeremiah would use the opportunity to address the king, as he had done before, on this matter of such personal moment to himself, and that the request was actually granted. Accordingly the prophet probably told no actual lie, but saved the king by concealing part, and the more important part, of the truth.

xxxviii. 14–18. Zedekiah inquired of Jeremiah if he could reveal anything to him, and swore that he would not kill him or surrender him to his foes. Jeremiah then said that, if he would surrender, his life and the city would be spared; if not, it would be burned and he would not escape.

19–23. Zedekiah replied that he feared the Chaldeans would hand him over to the Jewish deserters. Jeremiah replied that they would not do so, and besought him to obey, so it would be well with him. But if he refuse, then the women of the palace shall sing the dirge over him when they are captured. His friends have led him astray, and abandon him now that his feet have sunk in the mire. His wives and children and he himself will be captured, and the city will be burned.

24–28ᵃ. The king enjoined secrecy on the prophet, assuring him that he should not die. He also told him that if the princes asked what he and the king had said, he was to reply that he had petitioned not to be sent back to Jonathan's house, to die there. So when the princes asked him, he replied as the king commanded, and thus the purport of the interview remained unknown. So he stayed in the court of the guard.

xxxviii. 14. the third entry. This was no doubt well known to Baruch, but it is not mentioned elsewhere, nor do we ever read of a first or second entry. Giesebrecht with a slight emend-

house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah,
15 I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me. Then
Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare it unto thee,
wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee
16 counsel, thou wilt not hearken unto me. So Zedekiah the
king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, As the LORD
liveth, that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death,
neither will I give thee into the hand of these men
17 that seek thy life. Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah,
Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel:
If thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes,
then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned
18 with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house: but if

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ation (*m*^{e}*bō' hashshalīshīm* for *mābō' hashsh*^{e}*līshī*) gets the sense 'the body-guard's entry,' which is accepted by Duhm. P. Haupt, on the other hand, defends the present text; he supposes that the main entrance on the east was the first entrance, that on the north was the second, that on the south was the third, leading from the Temple to the palace. In the absence of definite information decision between these views is impossible. Clearly it was a place convenient for the king to reach without observation, and suitable for a secret meeting. The king was like a patient who begs his doctor to tell him the whole truth, but clings desperately to the hope of favourable news and is unprepared with any courage for the worst.

15. The prophet has rightly gauged the king's character. If the truth he has demanded should prove unwelcome, his personal resentment will be provoked, and he will abandon him to his enemies. So before Jeremiah speaks he expresses his fear to the king.

16. Zedekiah swears by Yahweh the giver of life (an uncommon oath), both to the prophet and himself, that he will not cause Jeremiah's life to be taken: may he lose his own if he is false to his oath!

secretly: is omitted by the LXX, probably correctly; it should have come at an earlier point.

17. Jeremiah gives the king the advice he had given to his subjects. The only hope for himself and the city lies in surrender. He speaks of 'the king of Babylon's princes' because Nebuchadnezzar himself was not in command at Jerusalem. See xxxix. 3, 5.

thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes,
then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chal-
deans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt
not escape out of their hand. And Zedekiah the king 19
said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are
fallen away to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into
their hand, and they mock me. But Jeremiah said, They 20
shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice
of the Lord, in that which I speak unto thee: so it shall
be well with thee, and thy soul shall live. But if thou 21

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19. Zedekiah shrinks from surrender, lest the Chaldeans deliver him over to the Jews who had deserted and they mishandle him. It was not an imaginary terror. Party spirit no doubt ran high; those who were opposed to the alliance with Egypt and revolt from Babylon would bitterly resent the ruinous policy for which the king had been responsible, and which its real authors had carried through with such high-handed violence towards its opponents. See note on xxxvii. 13. It was not taunts and insults merely that Zedekiah feared, but physical ill-treatment.

21, 22. If, however, the king refuses to accept these assurances, then this is the scene which Yahweh has shown the prophet. He has seen the palace women led out to the princes of Nebuchadnezzar, and singing a lamentation as they went. The dirge is in Qina rhythm, as Budde points out, and Jeremiah probably pronounced it so as to bring out its real character. But it is questionable if Budde is right in supposing that the lines are a well-known dirge, in use among the wailing women. The parallel in Obad. 7 does not prove this, for that passage is later and probably depends on ours. As we read 22 we cannot help being struck with the fact that the metaphor answers to the experience through which the prophet had passed. True, the figure is drawn rather from the fate of a traveller, who against his better judgement has taken a path which has led him into a swamp. But the words 'thy feet are sunk in the mire' recall so vividly the statement in 6, that they were probably suggested by the experience itself. And, if so, the vision seems to have flashed on the prophet even as he was speaking, and the verses to have been improvised. With his clairvoyant faculty he sees the sorrowful procession, the burden of their song he hears as a clairaudient, but only its general tenor; the form in which he reproduces it is moulded by his own experience. He had been cast by his enemies into the cistern, and his feet had sunk in the mire; Zedekiah had been mis-

refuse to go forth, this is the word that the LORD hath
22 shewed me: Behold, all the women that are left in the
king of Judah's house shall be brought forth to the king
of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say, [a] Thy
familiar friends have [b] set thee on, and have prevailed
over thee: *now that* thy feet are sunk in the mire, they
23 are turned away back. And they shall bring out all thy
wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt
not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the
hand of the king of Babylon: and [c] thou shalt cause this
24 city to be burned with fire. Then said Zedekiah unto
Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou
25 shalt not die. But if the princes hear that I have talked

[a] Heb. *The men of thy peace.* [b] Or, *deceived thee*
[c] Heb. *thou shalt burn &c.*

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led by his friends, but when his feet sank in the mire, no one drew him out. It may be added that Duhm, while recognizing the authenticity of the saying, thinks that it may have been spoken with reference to Judah, betrayed by her allies, especially Egypt. But while it would suit this admirably, there is no reason to question the representation in the text.

the women that are left: that is, from the previous capture of the city in 597 B. C. and the troubles of the present siege.

now that . . . **they . . . back.** Probably we should point differently and render, with the LXX, 'they have made thy feet to sink . . . back.' His friends have led him into trouble, and now leave him to his fate.

23. This verse is obviously no part of the vision, it adds very little to what has been already said, and the impression of the preceding verses is weakened by it. Duhm may be right in regarding it as an insertion. At the close we should read 'and this city shall be burned with fire,' with LXX and other Versions and a few Hebrew MSS.

24. Zedekiah commands secrecy , if this is observed he will not die. He seems to mean that if the prophet betrays what has passed the princes will kill him, since the king is powerless to protect him.

25. In spite of his precautions he fears that his interview with the prophet will not have gone unobserved, and instructs him how he is to answer the inevitable question of the princes.

with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee,
Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king;
hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death:
also what the king said unto thee: then thou shalt say 26
unto them, I [a] presented my supplication before the king,
that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house,
to die there. Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, 27
and asked him: and he told them according to all these
words that the king had commanded. So they left off
speaking with him; for the matter was not [b] perceived.
So Jeremiah abode in the court of the guard until the 28
day that Jerusalem was taken.

And it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken, [S] [c] (in **39**

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[a] Heb. *caused to fall.* [b] Or, *reported*

[c] See ch. lii. 4, &c., 2 Kings xxv. 1–12.

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hide it . . . death: a veiled threat; if you refuse to disclose it we shall kill you.

26. On this see the Introduction to this section (p. 171), where it is pointed out that Jeremiah probably had made this request to the king during the interview.

27. It fell out as the king had anticipated, and Jeremiah answered as he had been bidden. He probably told the truth, but not the whole truth, and he made a false impression on the princes. Even to-day exponents of ethics dispute how far such conduct is legitimate. At that time moral standards were very different from our own. And the consequences of a disclosure would have been serious, not for the prophet alone but for the king, who would have felt that his confidences had been betrayed. Duhm has a penetrating discussion of the question.

xxxviii. 28^b—xxxix. 14. THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM AND JEREMIAH'S FORTUNES.

This section presents some perplexing phenomena. We have a narrative of the destruction of Jerusalem which goes over a good deal of the ground covered by lii. In this the main subject is the fate of Zedekiah and the people rather than of Jeremiah. Further 4–13 is omitted in the LXX. Chap. xxxix. 1, 2 is inserted in the middle of a sentence between xxxviii. 28^b and xxxix. 3. These two verses are probably an insertion. They take us back in 1 to a point in the history which we have left far behind, and they are the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth

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an abridgement of lii. 4–7. When they are removed xxxviii. 28^{b} and xxxix. 3 form a single well-connected sentence. The question as to 4–13 is more difficult. This falls into two main divisions, 4–10 and 11–13, the latter of which is concerned with the lot of Jeremiah. The former is very generally regarded as an interpolation on the following grounds. It is absent in the LXX, and is an abridgement of lii. 7–16. It does not connect well with 3, for obviously Zedekiah did not wait till he saw that the Babylonian princes had taken their seat (4), but took to flight as soon as he knew that a breach had been made in the walls (lii. 7). Nor can one explain why the princes mentioned in 3 are left out of account in what follows. 11–13 is more relevant to the author's purpose, since it is concerned with Jeremiah, and some who regard 4–10 as an interpolation take another view of 11–13. Still there are grave reasons against accepting its authenticity. It is possible that Nebuchadnezzar had personally interested himself in the prophet, but it is hardly likely. Verse 11 does not connect well with 3, since Nebuzaradan is not enumerated among the princes in 3, and according to lii. 12 did not reach Jerusalem till a month later. It is also absent in the LXX. When 1, 2, 4–13 have been eliminated, we have a narrative to which no serious objection can be taken in xxxviii. 21^{b}, xxxix. 3, 14, which relates what the reader of the memoir would be anxious to learn, how Jeremiah fared after the capture of the city. Schmidt, it is true, strikes out the whole as 'manifestly unhistorical' (*Enc. Bib.* 2388). A clever attempt to secure more of 4–13 for the memoirs may be seen in Rothstein's introduction to the section in Kautzsch.

xxxviii. 28^{b}–xxxix. 3. When Jerusalem was captured (Nebuchadnezzar came against it in the tenth month of Zedekiah's ninth year, and a breach was made in the walls in the fourth month of his eleventh year), the princes of Nebuchadnezzar sat in the middle gate.

4–10. When Zedekiah and his warriors saw them, they fled by night by way of the Arabah, but he was overtaken by the Chaldeans in the plains of Jericho and taken to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, who slew his sons and all the nobles of Judah, blinded Zedekiah and bound him in fetters. The Chaldeans burned the palace and the city, and broke down the walls. Then Nebuzaradan carried the rest of the people, including the deserters, to Babylon, but left the poor who had nothing and gave them lands.

11–14. Nebuchadnezzar had charged Nebuzaradan to take care of Jeremiah, so he and the princes sent and fetched him from the court of the guard, and entrusted him to Gedaliah, who set him at liberty.

month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his
army against Jerusalem, and besieged it; in the eleventh 2
year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of
the month, a breach was made in the city:) [B] that all 3
the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the
middle gate, even Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim,
[a] Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, [a] Rab-mag, with all the
rest of the princes of the king of Babylon. [S] And it 4
came to pass that when Zedekiah the king of Judah and
all the men of war saw them, then they fled, and went
forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's
garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went
out the way of the Arabah. But the army of the Chal- 5
deans pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the
plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they
brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon to

[a] Titles of officers.

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xxxix. 1, 2: taken from lii. 4–7.

3. When the city was captured, the Babylonian princes sat in the middle gate, the situation of which is unknown, to administer affairs, and then sent to release Jeremiah (14). The names create difficulties. There are four names, the third and fourth of which have official designations appended. Of these four names the first and fourth are identical and probably duplicates. In 13 only two princes (apart from Nebuzaradan) are mentioned, and Nebushazban is there said to be the Rab-saris, the name given to the holder of the office in 3. Sarsechim is inexplicable. Samgar is perhaps, as Giesebrecht suggests, a corruption for Sar-mag = Rab-mag, and is to be omitted as a doublet, while -nebo Sarsechim is probably a corrupt form of Nebushazban (13). Accordingly two princes are mentioned whose names and titles are correctly given in 13. Rab-saris may mean 'chief of the eunuchs,' but more probably 'chief of the heads' (*rabû-să-rêši*), i. e. 'chief of the principal men;' Rab-mag is commonly explained to mean 'chief of the soothsayers,' but may mean 'chief of princes.'

4. The extract from lii. 4–16 begins here and continues to 10. See Introduction to this section. For the exegesis see Dr. Skinner's Commentary on Kings; as explained in the Introduction to the notes on Jer. lii.

Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he [a] gave judgement
6 upon him. Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of
Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of
7 Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put
out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him in fetters, to carry
8 him to Babylon. And the Chaldeans burned the king's
house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake
9 down the walls of Jerusalem. Then Nebuzaradan the
[b] captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon
the residue of the people that remained in the city, the
deserters also, that fell away to him, and the residue of the
10 people that remained. But Nebuzaradan the captain of
the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing,
in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields
11 at the same time. Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon
gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the
12 captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to
him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he
13 shall say unto thee. So Nebuzaradan the captain of the
guard sent, and Nebushazban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-
sharezer, Rab-mag, and all the chief officers of the king of
14 Babylon; [B] they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the

[a] Heb. *spake judgements with him.* See ch. xii. 1.

[b] See Gen. xxxvii. 36.

11, 12. If the account here is historical, we must suppose that Nebuchadnezzar had learned of Jeremiah's efforts to maintain peace, his advice to the Jews to surrender, and his unshaken confidence in the victory of Babylon. This is by no means impossible, but its probability is dubious.

13. See on 3; we have seen that this verse gives a more correct account of the officials and their titles.

14. This verse connects directly with 3. The two princes there mentioned, in the corrected text, had Jeremiah brought from the court of the guard and handed him over to Gedaliah, whose father Ahikam had early in Jehoiakim's reign protected the prophet (xxvi. 24). Presumably he had taken Jeremiah's advice and surcourt of the guard, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, 15
while he was shut up in the court of the guard, saying,
Go, and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, 16
Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil,

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rendered to the Chaldeans, and from him they had probably learnt about the prophet's attitude.

carry him home: i.e. probably to his own home, but the Hebrew is unusual and ambiguous. The last clause seems to mean that he could move freely among the people, he was a prisoner no longer.

xxxix. 15–18. A PROMISE OF SAFETY TO EBED-MELECH.

The authenticity of this section is denied not only by Schmidt, who regards the story of the rescue itself as unhistorical, but also by Duhm, who is followed by Erbt and Cornill. Duhm's judgement is influenced to some extent by his view that the women of the harem had imagined that the princes were getting rid of Jeremiah so as to have one less mouth to feed, and that Ebed-melech had shared this naïve opinion, so had saved him from pity, rather than as a pious person who had trusted in God (18). This ingenious romance rests on no solid foundation, and Cornill relies simply on its inappropriate position in the book, and its insignificant content. It is of course, as Giesebrecht says, impossible to prove the authenticity, but there is no adequate reason for denying it. Opposite inferences might be drawn from the parallelism with the address to Baruch (xlv). We should, it is true, have expected it to follow xxxviii. 13 or xxxviii. 28^{a}. But the editor is responsible for the arrangement, and he may have wished to carry the story on without interruption to the deliverance of Jeremiah after the siege. Probably it is chronologically later than xxxviii. 27.

xxxix. 15–18. While he was in the court of the guard, Yahweh bade Jeremiah tell Ebed-melech that He was bringing evil upon the city, but would deliver him, and he should not be delivered into the power of those whom he feared. His life should be spared, because he trusted in God.

xxxix. 16. and they . . . day. The LXX omits the words, which have probably arisen through dittography of the opening words of 17.

and not for good; and they [a] shall be accomplished
17 before thee in that day. But I will deliver thee in that
day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into
18 the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For
I will surely save thee, and thou shalt not fall by the
sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because
thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

40 [R] The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD,
after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let

[a] Or, *shall be before thee*

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17. the men . . . afraid: perhaps the Babylonians (as 18 suggests), but the phrase itself suits better the princes, whose vengeance for his interference he might well dread.

18. thy life . . . prey: see note on xxi. 9, and cf. the promise to Baruch (xlv. 5).

xl. 1–6. JEREMIAH, AFTER HIS RELEASE BY NEBUZARADAN, PREFERS TO REMAIN IN PALESTINE.

This passage, apart from 6, is regarded by Duhm, Erbt, and Cornill as a legend, connected with xxxiv. 11, 12. But it was by no means impossible for the situation described to arise. When Nebuzaradan, a month after the capture of the city, arrived at Jerusalem, Gedaliah seems to have gone to Mizpah. Jeremiah remained in the city, and was put in fetters with the other citizens. By the time the prisoners reached Ramah, Gedaliah would have heard of Jeremiah's case and intervened. The Babylonian officer may have been quite ignorant about Jeremiah; or he may have known of him either directly from Nebuchadnezzar, as we are told in xxxix. 11–13, or from the deserters. In any case it needed but an explanation to secure his liberty. It is difficult, however, to think that the address of Nebuzaradan to Jeremiah is an authentic report so far as 2^b, 3 with their familiar phraseology are concerned.

xl. 1–6. At Ramah Nebuzaradan took Jeremiah, who was in chains with the prisoners, and said that Yahweh had punished the people for their sins. He would release him and permit him his choice to go to Babylon or to remain with Gedaliah. So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah at Mizpah.

xl. 1. The opening words are due to the editor and are entirely inappropriate, since no oracle follows (see note on xxxi. 15–22).

him go from Ramah, [B] when he had taken him being bound in chains among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.
And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said 2
unto him, [S] The LORD thy God pronounced this evil
upon this place: and the LORD hath brought it, and 3
done according as he spake; because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. [B] And now, behold, 4
I loose thee this day from the chains which are upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come, and I will look well unto thee; but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee; whither it seemeth good and [a] convenient unto thee to go, thither
go. Now while he was not yet gone back, Go back then, 5

[a] Or, *right*

Ramah: see note on xxxi. 15. The captives probably halted here for the final arrangements to be made for their journey to Babylon.

2, 3. Here the heathen governor instructs Jeremiah in the latter's own theology.

4. Nebuzaradan sets him free from the manacles which fettered his hands, and gives him his choice of accompanying him to Babylon, where he will be treated with honour, or remaining in his own country.

5. Now while he was not yet gone back. The Hebrew is strange, and many attempts to explain it have been offered. The words are absent in the LXX; they seem to be a gloss, which is itself corrupt. The following words then connect with 4 and develop the second alternative offered to the prophet. If he decides to remain in Palestine, then let him go to Gedaliah and share in the task of building up the community under the new conditions. But that the prophet may feel that he has unrestricted liberty of action, the captain adds that if neither of the suggestions is to his mind, let him go wherever he wishes. We are not told what Jeremiah said in reply, but no doubt he signified his intention to remain. So the captain gave him 'victuals,' i.e., as the word means, food for his journey, and a present, i.e. to show him

said he, to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth [a] convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him
6 [b] victuals and a present, and let him go. Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

7 [c] Now when all the captains of the forces which were

[a] Or, *right* [b] Or, *an allowance* [c] See 2 Kings xxv. 23, 24.

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honour and provide for his necessities in the near future. Perhaps 'victuals and' should be omitted, as by LXX: the journey was short.

6. The choice of Jeremiah was probably determined by the thought that his place was rather with Gedaliah and the remnant than with the exiles. He looked forward to a complete restoration of the nation; and since its future home was to be in Palestine, he felt that Providence called him to remain in the land where he had so long laboured and build up the nucleus of the new Israel, and not at his age to begin a new life in Babylon. A sense of personal loyalty to Gedaliah, whom he might guide in his task, may also have moved him.

Mizpah: a city of Benjamin, lying from four to five miles north-west of Jerusalem, on the hill now called Neby Samwil.

xl. 7—xli. 3. GEDALIAH IS MURDERED BY ISHMAEL.

Schmidt says 'xl. 7—xli. 18 must have been taken from another source than the biography. The lifelikeness of the story is much praised, and it is generally used as an authentic account by modern historians. Literary critics are still apt to be deceived by vividness of description, local colour, names and dates, and charmed into forgetfulness of the most glaring inconsistencies and historical impossibilities. Such inconsistencies and impossibilities are not wanting in this story. A confused memory of the first Chaldean governor and of an abortive attempt by a side branch of the Davidic family to overthrow the new government, and local legends clustering about the cistern of Asa and the pool of Gibeon, may lie at its foundation; but in its present form it cannot well be earlier than the second century' (*Enc. Bib.* 2386). This drastic judgement is not shared by others, but while attributing the narrative to Baruch all are agreed that it presents very diffiin the fields, even they and their men, heard that the

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cult problems. A plausible explanation can be offered for Ishmael's murder of Gedaliah. It is questionable whether Baalis instigated him, in spite of Johanan's statement to that effect. Ishmael belonged to the house of David, and may have resented the appointment of Gedaliah, who did not belong to the royal house. But he seems to have been a strong adherent of the anti-Babylonian party, and would thus be politically opposed to Gedaliah and to the settlement of the country under Chaldean rule. It is true that his action was not only inexcusable but irrational. He could not hope to help his people's cause by a deed which was likely to exasperate the Babylonians. But it is not without other examples that a defeated party should express its patriotism by blind violence reacting most injuriously on its own cause. Much more inexplicable is the career of violence on which he entered after he had murdered Gedaliah. The sorrow of the pilgrims over the downfall of Jerusalem should have appealed to his sympathies, unless it seemed a reflection on the policy of the war-party which had involved such ruin. The sparing of the ten men who offered to disclose the stores they had hidden, might be due to desire for plunder, or to the anticipation that if he could initiate a guerilla warfare against the Chaldeans, such stores would be useful. The killing of the other seventy admits of no rational explanation ; one is almost tempted to think that there was an abnormal strain in Ishmael's personality. That eighty men, though unarmed, should tamely let themselves be overpowered by eleven men, and that seventy should be butchered, apparently without resistance, is also remarkable. And similarly right through the history this small company of bandits has it all its own way till Johanan's rescue-party forces it to escape into Ammon. We are not justified on account of these difficulties in denying the historicity of the narrative, but we must renounce the attempt at any rational explanation of it.

xl. 7–12. When the captains heard that Gedaliah had been made governor, and that the Jews who were left in Judah were committed to his care, they came to him at Mizpah. He exhorted them to be loyal to the Chaldeans, to gather fruits and dwell in their cities. And the Jews who had taken refuge in the surrounding countries came to Gedaliah and gathered much fruit.

13–16. Johanan and the captains warn Gedaliah that Baalis the king of Ammon has sent Ishmael to kill him, but Gedaliah refuses to believe it. Then Johanan offers to kill Ishmael, to avoid the ruin that would follow on Gedaliah's murder. But Gedaliah forbids him, treating his accusation as a slander on Ishmael.

king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, [a] and of the poorest of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to
8 Babylon; then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah
9 the son of the Maacathite, they and their men. And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king
10 of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to stand before the

[a] Or, *even*

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xli. 1–3. In the seventh month Ishmael, accompanied by ten men, after being entertained by Gedaliah, murders him and all the Jews and Chaldeans that were with him.

xl. 7–9 are repeated in an abbreviated form in 2 Kings xxv. 23, 24. The Babylonians had not thought it worth while to scour the country and collect all the scattered bands of Jews that had been in arms against them. These now made their submission to Gedaliah. Jonathan is omitted in Kings, but whether rightly is uncertain. Netophah seems to have been a village on the east of Bethlehem, now Beit Nettif (Neh. vii. 26, xii. 28, 1 Chron. ii. 54). Maacah lay to the south-east of Hermon.

9. The LXX and 2 Kings xxv. 24 give a better text, 'Fear not because of the servants of the Chaldeans,' i. e. such Babylonian officials as were left on duty in various parts of the land.

10. to stand before. In xv. 19, xxxv. 19 the phrase means 'to be engaged in the service of.' If that is the meaning here, the point is that Gedaliah has his residence at Mizpah, that he may serve the interests of such Chaldeans as may come to him. The sense required is, however, that he should serve the interests of the Jews entrusted to his care. He would, it is true, have an opportunity of doing this as servant of the Chaldeans, but the main point would thus be implied rather than expressed. We should accordingly interpret as in xv. 1, where it means 'to intercede.'

Chaldeans, which shall come unto us: but ye, gather
ye wine and summer fruits and oil, and put them in your
vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken.
Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, and 11
among the children of Ammon, and in Edom, and that
were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon
had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over
them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan;
then all the Jews returned out of all places whither they 12
were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah,
unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very
much.

Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the 13
captains of the forces that were in the fields, came to
Gedaliah to Mizpah, and said unto him, Dost thou know 14
that Baalis the king of the children of Ammon hath sent

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gather ye wine . . . oil. The city had been captured in the fourth month; a month later Nebuzaradan had come to wind up the affairs of the conquered kingdom. Gedaliah was killed in the seventh month, according to Jewish tradition on the third of the month. That in so short a time it should have been possible to gather such quantities of grapes, olives, and summer fruits as they appear from 12 to have done, is a remarkable testimony to the extent to which the Babylonians had risen above the methods of barbarism which characterized ancient and have characterized so much modern warfare. The fruit trees had been spared, and the fruit would be just ripe.

ye have taken: better 'ye will take;' up to the present they had been 'in the fields' (7).

13. that were in the fields: probably a scribe's addition from 7; matters had since altered.

14. Baalis may have been king of Ammon when the five kings sent ambassadors to Zedekiah to negotiate an alliance against Babylon (xxvii. 3). If so, he would have a grudge against those who had thwarted the project. But this would hardly account for his instigation of the assassination, and it is not easy to see what advantage he hoped to reap from it. Johanan may have been mistaken. Gedaliah's refusal to believe the charge confirms the impression of his noble character which we should otherwise derive from the narrative.

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take thy life? But
15 Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. Then
Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah
secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay
Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know
it: wherefore should he take thy life, that all the Jews
which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and
16 the remnant of Judah perish? But Gedaliah the son of
Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou
shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of
Ishmael.

41 [a] Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that
Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama,
of the seed royal, and *one of* the chief officers of the
king, and ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the
son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread
2 together in Mizpah. Then arose Ishmael the son of
Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and
smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan
with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon

[a] See 2 Kings xxv. 25.

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15. Johanan saw clearly the chaos that would result from the murder of Gedaliah, on whom the future of the little community depended, and felt himself justified in offering to remove him secretly. To this Gedaliah could not assent, for he would not believe evil of Ishmael; and even had he shared Johanan's opinion, he would hardly have protected himself by secret murder. Probably he would have taken effective precautions.

xli. 1. Cf. 2 Kings xxv. 25.

in the seventh month. The Jews kept the fast for Gedaliah on the third of this month, and this probably preserves a correct tradition of the date of the murder.

and one . . . king. If the words are authentic the R.V. is probably correct in inserting '*one of*,' since Ishmael was accompanied only by ten men (2), and chief officers of the king in addition were certainly not with him. But the words are omitted

had made governor over the land. Ishmael also slew 3
all the Jews that were with him, even with Gedaliah, at
Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, even
the men of war. And it came to pass the second day 4
after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew it, that 5

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in LXX and 2 Kings xxv. 25 (which, however, abbreviates), and should probably be omitted.

3. even the men of war. The LXX omits these words, probably rightly; had Babylonian soldiers been there, the massacre would hardly have been accomplished so easily.

xli. 4–18. ISHMAEL, AFTER FURTHER ATROCITIES, FORCED TO RETREAT TO AMMON.

Nothing need be added to what has been said in the Introduction to the previous section.

xli. 4–10. The following day Ishmael met eighty pilgrims, and invited them to come to Gedaliah. When they came into the city he slew them and cast them into the pit, with the exception of ten men who offered to show him hidden stores of food. The pit which he filled with dead bodies was that made by Asa. Then he carried off all the rest of the people who were left in Mizpah, to go to the land of Ammon.

11–18. When Johanan and the captains heard of Ishmael's doings they pursued him and came up with him at Gibeon. The captives joined Johanan, but Ishmael escaped with eight men to the Ammonites. Then Johanan and the captains took those whom they had rescued near to Bethlehem, purposing for fear of the Chaldeans to go to Egypt.

xli. 4. the second day: i.e. probably what we should call the next day. Ishmael took precautions that no one outside of Mizpah should learn of the massacre.

5. It is remarkable that these pilgrims came from what was formerly the Northern Kingdom, where no doubt many Israelites remained, but blended with foreign settlers. The sanctuary to which they were coming was not, as some suppose, at Mizpah, for 'the house of the LORD' must refer to Jerusalem. Any purpose they meant to serve at Mizpah could have equally well been accomplished at home, and the narrative suggests that they would not have entered Mizpah at all but for Ishmael's invitation. We are not to press the phrase 'the house of the LORD' to mean that these pilgrims had not even heard that the Temple was destroyed; their whole attitude of mourning is eloquent as to their knowledge of this. When the structure was destroyed the site still re-

there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and
from Samaria, even fourscore men, having their beards
shaven and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves,
with [a] oblations and frankincense in their hand, to bring
6 them to the house of the LORD. And Ishmael the son
of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them,
weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as
he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the
7 son of Ahikam. And it was so, when they came into
the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah
slew them, *and cast them* into the midst of the pit, he,
8 and the men that were with him. But ten men were

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[a] Or, *meal offerings*

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mained sacred, and it is possible that some sort of cultus may have been carried on there during the exile. The pilgrims were going to offer not an animal but a vegetable offering together with frankincense. For Shiloh the LXX reads Salem, but though accepted by several who compare Gen. xxxiii. 18, the Hebrew is probably to be preferred. In token of deep mourning for the fate of Jerusalem they had shaved the beard, rent their clothes, and gashed themselves (cf. xvi. 6).

6. weeping all along as he went. If the text is correct Ishmael weeps in pretended sympathy. But this theatrical exhibition might well have struck the pilgrims as protesting too much. The LXX, 'as they were going along and weeping,' is much better. Giesebrecht's objection that this should have been mentioned in 5 is plausible, but incorrect. For the description in 5 refers to the dress they wore and the signs of mourning they displayed throughout their journey; the weeping is not a continuous action, but a short though passionate outburst. And when we consider the circumstances this clause adds a most effective touch to the picture. For from Mizpah they catch sight of the ruined city, their first sight of its desolation, and burst into unrestrained wailing. We are naturally reminded of Luke xix. 41.

7. Having thus enticed them into the midst of the city, and probably into a situation where they were in a trap, Ishmael and his companions slew them. The reason for this atrocity cannot be conjectured with any confidence. (See the Introduction to the previous section, p. 183.)

8. His reason for sparing the ten men is uncertain: see the

found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not:
for we have stores hidden in the field, of wheat, and of
barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbare, and
slew them not among their brethren. Now the pit 9
wherein Ishmael cast all the dead bodies of the men
whom he had slain, by the side of Gedaliah, (the same
was that which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha
king of Israel,) Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it
with them that were slain. Then Ishmael carried away 10
captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah,
even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained
in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard
had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: Ishmael
the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and
departed to go over to the children of Ammon.

But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the 11
captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all
the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,
then they took all the men, and went to fight with 12

Introduction. It is still quite common for farmers in Palestine to store grain and other produce in pits, and it is to such stores that allusion is here made. (See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, pp. 509, 510.)

9. The appropriate climax was reached with the throwing of the dead bodies of his victims into the great cistern with which Asa had furnished Mizpah when he built it as a fortress against Baasha (1 Kings xv. 22). A cistern of this kind was necessary if a stronghold situated at the height of Mizpah was not to be forced by thirst to surrender. The cistern was ceremonially defiled and rendered useless by Ishmael's act.

by the side of Gedaliah. The Hebrew is unintelligible. The LXX reads 'was a great pit;' the difference in the Hebrew is slight, and the LXX obviously gives the true text.

10. the king's daughters: not necessarily the daughters of Zedekiah, but the princesses of the royal house. They were related to Ishmael; the others he would take as hostages or perhaps to sell into slavery. It is noteworthy that the Chaldeans had left princesses of the blood in Palestine.

12. Gibeon: i. e. el-Jib, about a mile to the north of Mizpah: see

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the
13 great waters that are in Gibeon. Now it came to pass
that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw
Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the
14 forces that were with him, then they were glad. So all
the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from
Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan
15 the son of Kareah. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah
escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the
16 children of Ammon. Then took Johanan the son of
Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with
him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered
from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after
that he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, even the
men of war, and the women, and the children, and the
17 eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon: and

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xxviii. 1. The 'waters' are apparently to be identified with the pool mentioned in 2 Sam. ii. 13, the scene of the ghastly contest between twelve soldiers of Joab's army and twelve of Abner's.

14. Apparently the slender force of Ishmael could exercise no adequate control over such a train of captives, and would be sufficiently concerned on its own account to escape the vengeance of Johanan. As it was, not only did the captives escape, but Ishmael lost two of his men.

cast about: an archaism meaning 'turned about,' 'turned round.'

16. The text must be corrupt, since 'from Mizpah' is unsuitable. Hitzig has restored the true text by a slight change, 'all the remnant of the people whom Ishmael . . . . had carried away captive from Mizpah.' Probably we should strike out 'even the men of war' as an incorrect gloss on the preceding word. There would hardly be soldiers in the company of captives. Ebed-melech may have been one of the eunuchs; they would be in charge of the princesses.

17. Geruth Chimham is not mentioned elsewhere. Chimham is probably to be identified with the son of Barzillai who befriended David on his flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xix. 37-40). Geruth is a word which occurs here only; it is explained to mean 'khan' or 'lodging place' (so margin), but this is very dubious, and we they departed, and dwelt in [a] Geruth Chimham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt, because of the 18 Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor over the land.

Then all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the 42

[a] Or, *the lodging place of Chimham*

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should probably read, with Aquila and Josephus and most recent scholars, Gidroth, i. e. 'sheep-folds.'

xlii. 1—xliii. 7. AGAINST GOD'S WILL AS DECLARED BY JEREMIAH, THE PEOPLE MIGRATE TO EGYPT.

Schmidt naturally regards this section, and the whole story of the migration to Egypt and the incidents said to have happened there, as historically very dubious. Generally it is assigned to Baruch, though Duhm and others suppose that the supplementer has been at work in Jeremiah's reply. In any case the narrative itself is thoroughly trustworthy.

xlii. 1–6. The captains and people ask Jeremiah to pray for direction, and he promises to do so and declare faithfully Yahweh's answer. They promise that they will obey, whatever the answer may be.

7–22. After ten days the word of Yahweh came to the prophet, and he announced it to the people. If they will abide in the land Yahweh will build them up, and the king of Babylon will not molest them. But if they determine to go into Egypt, instead of the peace and plenty they thus hope to secure, sword and famine shall overtake them, and they shall die there. As Yahweh's anger has been poured on the Jews in Jerusalem, so it will be on the Jews in Egypt. They had dealt deceitfully in asking for Yahweh's direction and promising to fulfil it, and then disobeying.

xliii. 1–7. The captains and proud men replied to Jeremiah that he lied in claiming to speak in Yahweh's name; it was at the instigation of Baruch, and death and captivity at the hands of the Babylonians would be the result. So they took all the people, including Jeremiah and Baruch, to Tahpanhes in Egypt.

xlii. 1. It is remarkable that in the story of Ishmael's atrocities no reference is made to Jeremiah or Baruch. It is, however, probable that they were under Gedaliah's protection, and carried

son of Kareah, and [a] Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and
all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came
2 near, and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let, we pray
thee, our supplication [b] be accepted before thee, and
pray for us unto the Lord thy God, even for all this
remnant; for we are left but a few of many, as thine
3 eyes do behold us: that the Lord thy God may shew us
the way wherein we should walk, and the thing that we
4 should do. Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them,
I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto the Lord
your God according to your words; and it shall come to
pass that whatsoever thing the Lord shall answer you,
I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back
5 from you. Then they said to Jeremiah, The Lord be
a true and faithful witness [c] amongst us, if we do not
even according to all the word wherewith the Lord thy
6 God shall send thee to us. Whether it be good, or

[a] In ch. xliii. 2, *Azariah.* [b] Heb. *fall.* [c] Or, *against*

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away after his murder and then rescued. We may infer this with some confidence from the mode of reference here.

Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah. We should probably read, with the LXX, 'Azariah the son of Maaseiah:' cf. xliii. 2 and xl. 8.

2, 3. The Jews were quite sincere in their desire to learn what direction Yahweh had for them, and they did not doubt that Jeremiah really stood in the council of God. But they probably did not anticipate that the response would be what it was. Escape from territory under Chaldean government would have seemed to them so obvious a necessity that they would not look for more than instructions how this was to be secured. Notice 'Yahweh thy God' answered in 4 by 'Yahweh your God.' In 5, 6 we have first 'Yahweh thy God,' then 'Yahweh our God.'

4. Jeremiah hints in his reply that the answer may be unwelcome. His own judgement of the situation was no doubt what he subsequently learned the Divine will to be; and he knew that his petitioners had made up their minds in the contrary direction. Still they protest that whatever be the response, evil no less than good, they will obey it (5, 6).

whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the Lord our God.

And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of 7
the Lord came unto Jeremiah. Then called he Johanan 8
the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which were with him, and all the people from the least
even to the greatest, and said unto them, Thus saith the 9
Lord, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to [a] present your supplication before him: If ye will still abide 10
in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent
me of the evil that I have done unto you. Be not afraid 11

[a] Or, *lay*

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7. This verse is very important for the insight it gives us into the nature of prophecy. Jeremiah does not confuse the Divine revelation with the desires of his heart or the conclusions of his judgement. Otherwise he would not have needed to wait for ten days. His waiting was not that his own mind might be made up, or to still the excitement among the people; for to prolong the suspense, especially when every hour seemed precious, would have been fatal to such an endeavour; nor yet in the hope that new circumstances might guide his decision. It was quite literally because he would not announce as a Divine revelation an answer which he did not definitely know to be such. It was an element in his prophetic gift that he could clearly and sharply distinguish between objective and subjective, between the word of God and the thought of his own heart.

9–22. In this answer Duhm, followed by Erbt, Cornill, and Rothstein, strikes out 15–18 as due to a supplementer. The kernel of the oracle he finds in 19–21; what belongs to it in 9–14 he regards as much worked over.

10. I repent me. To the modern reader this suggests that Yahweh regrets what He has done, and if He were again placed in the same situation would act differently. This, however, is not the meaning. It is no confession of mistake or remorse for the evil He has inflicted. But now that His righteous judgement has been executed, His attitude to His people is changed, and for the future He is prepared to build up those whom His justice has forced Him to pull down.

11. They not unnaturally feared that Nebuchadnezzar would

of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not
afraid of him, saith the LORD: for I am with you to save
12 you, and to deliver you from his hand. And I will grant
you mercy, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause
13 you to return to your own land. But if ye say, We will not
dwell in this land; so that ye obey not the voice of the
14 LORD your God; saying, No; but we will go into the
land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the
sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and
15 there will we dwell: [S] now therefore hear ye the word
of the LORD, O remnant of Judah: thus saith the LORD
of hosts, the God of Israel, If ye wholly set your faces to
16 enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there; then it shall
come to pass, that the sword, which ye fear, shall overtake
you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof
ye are afraid, [a] shall follow hard after you there in Egypt;
17 and there ye shall die. So shall it be with all the men
that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they
shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:
and none of them shall remain or escape from the
18 evil that I will bring upon them. For thus saith the
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and
my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of

[a] Heb. *shall cleave after you.*

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treat the murder of his representative as a new act of rebellion on the part of the incorrigible Jews, and exact vengeance without too nice a discrimination between the guilty and the innocent.

12. to return to your own land. Since they were in their own land at the time, we should no doubt point the text differently and read, with the Syriac and Vulgate, 'to dwell in your own land.'

14. The advantages of Egypt appeal to them as forcibly as they did to the Hebrews in the desert. After the stress of the past and the terror of the present, an idyllic future seems to lie before them. If 'war' has a definite reference, it may be to a punitive expedition sent by Babylon or to an attack led by Ishmael.

Jerusalem, so shall my fury be poured forth upon you, when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more. [B] The 19
LORD hath spoken concerning you, O remnant of Judah, Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have testified unto you this day. For ye have dealt deceitfully [a] against 20
your own souls; for ye sent me unto the LORD your God, saying, Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it: and I have this day 21
declared it to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of the LORD your God in any thing for the which he hath sent me unto you. Now therefore know certainly that ye 22
shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place whither ye desire to go to sojourn there.

And it came to pass that when Jeremiah had made an 43
end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the LORD their God, wherewith the LORD their God had sent him to them, even all these words, then spake 2
Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of

[a] Or, *in your souls*

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19. We should probably read 'This is the word of the LORD unto you' (so Targum, Symmachus, and Vulgate). If 15–18 is a subsequent insertion, this verse is then the apodosis to 13, 14. We should also insert, with the LXX, 'Now therefore' before 'know.' No explicit statement of their intention to disobey seems to have been needed. Jeremiah saw it in their faces.

20. dealt deceitfully against. The Hebrew is rather dubious. It would be better, with the LXX, to read 'ye have done evil against.' They are responsible for the evil which will follow, since they took the initiative in requesting Divine direction and spontaneously promised to obey it.

xliii. 1. The people heard Jeremiah to the end without interruption.

Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah,
Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent
thee to say, Ye shall not go into Egypt to sojourn there:
3 but Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against
us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans,
that they may put us to death, and carry us away captives
4 to Babylon. So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the
captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not
the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah.
5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains

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2. and all the proud men, saying. The Hebrew for 'saying' is against the idiom of the language and not the usual expression; we should read 'defiant' (*hammōrīm* for *'ōm*^{e}*rīm*), with Giesebrecht and others. The LXX omits 'proud,' and is followed by Cornill and Rothstein.

Thou speakest falsely. They do not, of course, mean to disobey Yahweh's word, but it runs so counter to their reason and their wishes that they will not believe that it is His word. Yet they do not venture to hint that Jeremiah has deliberately concocted the message and palmed it off on the people as Yahweh's oracle. Baruch has got the old man under his influence, and played on his senility, so that he attributes to heaven-sent inspiration what is due only to Baruch's sinister suggestion. Baruch had perhaps allowed his judgement on the flight into Egypt to become known. It is noteworthy that Jeremiah makes no answer. It would be precarious to argue that this was due to any doubt, which he had to solve through internal debate, and the solution of which was expressed in the scene at Tahpanhes recorded in 8-13. His certainty was not affected by the reception accorded to his message.

5. that . . . Judah. This is a strange expression, which would have been suitable to express a return from a world-wide dispersion, but not one from the neighbouring lands. The LXX reads simply 'that were returned to sojourn in the land.' This may well be the true reading, the Hebrew having arisen out of it through the almost mechanical addition by a heedless scribe of phraseology familiar in a different connexion. There is force in Cornill's remark that we do not expect in this verse a special category of the remnant, this comes in 6, but rather something which was characteristic of the whole remnant. Since in this passage 'sojourn' is used only with reference to Egypt, he thinks some such clause as 'who had set their faces to sojourn in the land

of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all the nations whither they had been driven to sojourn in the land of Judah; the men, and 6
the women, and the children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah; and they came into the land of 7
Egypt; for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: and they came even to Tahpanhes. Then came the word 8

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of Egypt' would answer all requirements, but confesses himself at a loss to understand how the present text can have arisen out of it.

6. It is not clear whether Jeremiah and Baruch were forcibly carried into Egypt, or voluntarily accompanied the refugees. The latter would not be inconsistent with the prophet's protest. His vocation lifted him above the common duty. Just as he advised others to desert to the Chaldeans, but felt his own place to be in the doomed city to the last; so he may have counselled the remnant to remain in the land, but when they refused have felt it his duty to accompany them.

7. Tahpanhes: i. e. Daphne or Defenneh (ii. 16), a frontier city of Egypt, lying on the road out of Egypt to Palestine.

xliii. 8–13. JEREMIAH PREDICTS THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR WILL CONQUER EGYPT.

Duhm regards this section as 'historically worthless Midrash,' but this judgement is not generally accepted. The passage presents real difficulties, but they are largely removed by textual criticism. As a frontier fortress Tahpanhes would quite naturally be taken by Nebuchadnezzar at an early stage of the invasion of Egypt. The narrative is probably from the pen of Baruch, but may have been touched by a later editor. It may be added that Erbt's discussion of the passage is especially suggestive, though it would be unwarrantable to suppose that the scene expressed any re-establishment of the prophet's conviction as to the flight into Egypt which had been shaken by the accusation that Baruch, not Yahweh, was the source of it (see note on 2).

xliii. 8–13. While Jeremiah was in Tahpanhes Yahweh bade him take great stones and bury them at the entry of Pharaoh's house, in the sight of the Jews, and tell them in His name that He

9 of the Lord unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, Take

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will bring His servant Nebuchadnezzar, who shall set his throne over the buried stones. He shall smite Egypt, and burn the temples of its gods, and treat the land of Egypt as a shepherd treats his garment, and break the obelisks of Beth-shemesh.

xliii. 8. The revelation seems to have come to Jeremiah soon after the arrival at Tahpanhes. The company would probably have to halt there to receive permission to proceed.

9. The text is probably corrupt. The words rendered 'and hide them in mortar in the brickwork' have occasioned much difficulty; Graf in fact found all the explanations offered so unsatisfactory that he was tempted to think that the action was not really performed, a view taken by some scholars with reference to the symbolic actions recorded in Ezekiel. This, however, must not be accepted here. The LXX read a different text, 'in the forecourt;' the other Greek Versions and the Vulgate a different text again. Moreover the two words in the Hebrew are suspiciously alike; one of them occurs nowhere else, and the other only in Neh. iii. 14 and possibly 2 Sam. xii. 31. Gillies thinks the scribe intended to write the second word, but by a slip wrote the first, and then without crossing it out wrote the word he had meant to write. More probably, however, we should strike out the second word as due to dittography of the first, and then emend the first word by omitting a consonant, reading 'in secret' for 'in mortar,' with the Vulgate and the Greek Versions other than the LXX. The clause would then run 'and hide them in secret at the entry,' &c. Probably, as Erbt and Cornill think, the incident occurred at night. This is not negatived by the clause 'in sight of the men of Judah,' for in Ezek. xii. 1-16 we have a similar sign enacted by night in the sight of 'the rebellious house:' cf. especially 'I brought it forth in the dark, and bare it upon my shoulder in their sight' (Ezek. xii. 7, cf. 6). It is before a company of Jews and not the whole population of the city that the mysterious sign is enacted. The aged prophet painfully carries large stones to the entrance of Pharaoh's house and, as the wondering Jews look on, buries them before it. The uncanny scene enacted under cover of the night soon receives its explanation. The Jews have come to Egypt to escape from Nebuchadnezzar. But the king's long arm will at length reach them there. He will invade Egypt and above these very stones will erect his throne. The act of the prophet is no mere sign. Just as the prophetic word, once uttered, moves forward to effect its own fulfilment, so the prophetic deed is not simply a prediction, it sets in motion the train of events which is to lead up to its realization. To an audience familiar with this almost magical efficacy of prophets' words and acts, an

great stones in thine hand, and [a] hide them in mortar in the brickwork, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; and say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the 10
God of Israel: Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his [b] royal pavilion over them. And he shall 11
come, and shall smite the land of Egypt; such as are for death *shall be given* to death, and such as are for captivity to captivity, and such as are for the sword to the sword. And I will kindle a fire in the houses of 12

[a] Or, *lay them with mortar in the pavement* (or *square*)

[b] †Or, *glittering*

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act of this kind must have appealed with a force we can hardly imagine. They would feel themselves to be present when new forces were being released; they stood at the fountain-head of a new current in history.

at the entry of Pharaoh's house. This is generally regarded as a royal palace, and the question has been raised whether Jeremiah could have ventured on this action. More probably it was not a palace in the strict sense of the term, but a house used for the royal residence if the king happened to visit Tahpanhes, as in view of its military importance he would do at times. And the stones would not be buried within the residence itself but in front of it. The scene of the prophet's operations may have been the brick pavement by the fort excavated by Prof. Petrie in 1886. But if we omit 'in the brickwork' one ground for the identification disappears, and it is not probable that the prophet would have to remove part of a pavement before he buried the stones.

10. and will set: LXX and Syriac better, 'he shall set.'

royal pavilion. The Hebrew word occurs only here. The root may mean 'beautiful,' 'brilliant.' The word must express here something appertaining to the king's royal state, it may mean the pavilion or perhaps the carpet on which his throne was placed. The order of the clauses rather favours the view that the pavilion is meant, since the spreading of the carpet would precede the placing of the throne.

11. Cf. xv. 2.

12. I will kindle: read, with LXX, Syr., and Vulg., 'he will kindle.'

the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry
them away captives: and he shall array himself with
the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment;
and he shall go forth from thence in peace. He shall
13 also break the [a] pillars of [b] Beth-shemesh, that is in the

[a] †Or, *obelisks* [b] Or, *The house of the sun* Probably, *Heliopolis* or *On.*

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he shall array . . . garment. This is a difficult clause, and very variously interpreted. The word rendered 'array himself' means usually 'to wrap oneself,' and many abide by this sense here. The point, however, is by no means clear. The best representatives of this view take it to be the ease with which the king of Babylon will possess himself of the land of Egypt. But the idea of clothing oneself in a country is very strange, and the point of the comparison ought to have been clearly expressed. Hitzig and Duhm think the meaning is that just as a shepherd reverses his mantle, wearing now the inside of the fleece and now the outside next the skin, according as the weather is cold or hot, so the king of Babylon will reverse things in Egypt, turn them upside down. This sense, however, is very dubious. Others prefer the rendering 'roll up;' the point is then that the conqueror takes up Egypt and its possessions as easily as the shepherd rolls up his mantle with all it contains and carries it with him. The LXX has a peculiar rendering to the effect that Nebuchadnezzar will treat Egypt as a shepherd cleanses his vermin-infested garment, picking off the objectionable inmates one by one. He can do this deliberately and thoroughly, since he has plenty of leisure. The metaphor is not one which would commend itself to the taste of the present day, but in itself it is vigorous and effective, expressing Jeremiah's contempt for the Egyptians and his recognition of Nebuchadnezzar's military power. This rendering is accepted by Cornill, von Gall, and Rothstein.

13. This verse is regarded by some as an addition, since after Nebuchadnezzar is said in 12 to leave Egypt in peace, it is out of place to return to his destruction of the obelisks and temples. Rothstein escapes this objection by inserting 13^a after 12^a, and striking out 13^b as a repetition of 12^a.

the pillars . . . Egypt. If the text is correct, Beth-shemesh is probably a proper name, to be identified, as the margin says, with Heliopolis or On. The clause 'that is in the land of Egypt,' is probably a gloss intended to distinguish the place mentioned from the Beth-shemesh in Palestine, a distinction quite needless for the writer to have made. The LXX has 'that is in On,' so probably did not take Beth-shemesh as a proper name, but under-land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of Egypt shall he burn with fire.

[BS] The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all 44

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stood the whole clause to mean 'the temple of the sun which is in On.' Heliopolis was a city about six miles north-east of Cairo. It was famous for its temple of the sun, and the avenue of obelisks in front of it. 'Cleopatra's Needle' was one of these obelisks; of the rest one only remains in its place. Others are in Rome, Constantinople, and Paris.

The question whether Nebuchadnezzar actually invaded Egypt has been much discussed, but a fragmentary inscription of his shows that in 568 B. C. such an invasion did take place, in which the Egyptian king Amasis was defeated. At that time Jeremiah is hardly likely to have been still alive.

xliv. JEREMIAH TESTIFIES AGAINST THE WORSHIP OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

This section, painful though it is to see the rebellious temper which animated the people to the last, is of great historical interest. The effect of the disasters which had come so thickly upon the people was not unnaturally that many felt themselves dispensed from the service of a God who could not or would not help them. In a most instructive passage in Ezekiel we read of those who, while the city and Temple were still standing, practised a degraded form of idolatry, saying 'Yahweh seeth us not; Yahweh hath forsaken the land' (Ezek. viii. 12). Similarly the refugees in Egypt argued quite plausibly, it is only since the finding of the Book of the Law and the introduction of new-fangled ideas and suppression of older forms of worship that misfortunes have overwhelmed us. The practical inference they drew was that they would do well to resume the cults they had abandoned, and enjoy the prosperity which had been their lot in those days of religious breadth and material prosperity. The present chapter is based on Baruch's memoirs, but it has received not a little expansion. It is noteworthy that no information is given us at the outset as to the occasion, and that we have to infer the situation from what is told us in the latter part of the chapter. The address of Jeremiah (2–14) is largely made up of phraseology such as is elsewhere familiar to us in the book. But even in this we may recognize that the drift of the prophet's argument is correctly reproduced.

xliv. 1–10. Jeremiah spoke to the Jews in Egypt as follows: You have seen how Yahweh has made Jerusalem and Judah desolate for the idolatry they practised, though He sent His the Jews which dwelt in the land of Egypt, which dwelt

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prophets to warn them. Why then are you doing evil by practising idolatry in Egypt, to bring utter ruin on yourselves? Have you forgotten the sin of your fathers and your own sin?

11–14. Therefore Yahweh will cut off the remnant of Judah that is in Egypt, so that none shall return but fugitives.

15–19. Then the assembly replied that they would not hearken; but they would perform their vow to worship the Queen of Heaven, as they had done in Judah, for then all was well with them. But since they had abandoned her worship, disaster had been their portion. And the worship offered by the women had been with the consent of their husbands.

20–28. Jeremiah replied, Yahweh took note of your idolatrous worship, till He could bear it no longer, hence the desolation of your land and the evil you are suffering. So since you hold fast your vows to worship the Queen of Heaven, do so; but know that Yahweh will slay all the Jews in Egypt, so that only very few shall return to the land of Judah. Then it will be known whose word shall stand.

29–30. And the sign shall be that Pharaoh Hophra shall be given into the power of his foes.

xliv. 1. The place where the incident occurred is not named, but only the localities from which the assembly was drawn. The clause mentioning these is struck out by several as probably a later insertion, and the presence of Jews from Pathros, i. e. Upper Egypt, asserted in 15 (see note), is surprising. As we know from the recently discovered Aramaic papyri, there was a colony of Jews in Pathros, and some of these may have been present. Moreover xxiv. 8 justifies the view that even before the fall of Jerusalem there was a body of Jews in Egypt. It is possible that some of these had come to Tahpanhes to meet the fugitives. But the impression made by the narrative is rather that some time had elapsed since their arrival. Not all at once is the reversion to heathenism likely to have been accomplished. True, the people had acted in defiance of Jeremiah's exhortations; yet this had not been in their minds rebellion against Yahweh, but a refusal to recognize the prophet as His spokesman. The stage they had now reached did not involve a formal renunciation of Yahweh, but a recognition of other deities as legitimate objects of worship. But after the Deuteronomic Reformation it was a distinct repudiation of the principles on which it had rested. It was thus a reversion to the pre-Reformation standpoint, but it was a sin against light to a greater degree than the idolatry of the earlier period. In fairness, however, it must be admitted that from the popular standpoint not a little was to be said for the view that the Reformation had proved a disaster.

at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the
country of Pathros, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, 2
the God of Israel: Ye have seen all the evil that I have
brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah;
and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man
dwelleth therein; because of their wickedness which 3
they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that
they went to burn incense, *and* to serve other gods,
whom they knew not, neither they, nor ye, nor your
fathers. Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the 4
prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Oh,
do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they 5
hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their
wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. Where- 6
fore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was
kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of
Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as it is
this day. Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God 7

Migdol was another frontier town a little to the east of Tahpanhes, now known as Tell es-Sêrnut. It lay on the high road from Asia into Egypt, and is to be distinguished from the Migdol of Exod. xiv. 2. For Noph see on ii. 16. Pathros is Upper Egypt. The Egyptian name Pa-to-ris means 'Land of the South.'

2. The occasion of the address is not defined, as no doubt it would be in Baruch's memoirs, but apparently it was some religious festival at which Jews of the neighbouring localities had come together; the people began their preparations for the worship of the Queen of Heaven (vii. 18), and thus called forth the prophet's denunciation. The prophet's address has probably been a good deal edited, but no satisfactory construction of the original is now possible.

3–5. The fluctuation between the second and third person may be due partly to textual corruption, partly to expansion.

burn incense: better 'to offer sacrifice' (see note on i. 16), and so throughout the chapter. For the latter part of the verse cf. xix. 4.

4. Cf. vii. 25, xxv. 4, &c.

6. Cf. vii. 20, xxxiii. 10, xlii. 18.

7. against your own souls: cf. xxvi. 19.

of hosts, the God of Israel: Wherefore commit ye *this*
great evil against your own souls, to cut off from you
man and woman, infant and suckling, out of the midst
8 of Judah, to leave you none remaining; in that ye provoke me unto anger with the works of your hands,
burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt,
whither ye be gone to sojourn; that ye may be cut off,
and that ye may be a curse and a reproach among all
9 the nations of the earth? Have ye forgotten the wickedness of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of
Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own
wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which
they committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets
10 of Jerusalem? They are not humbled even unto this
day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law,
nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your
11 fathers. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the
God of Israel: Behold, I will set my face against you
12 for evil, even to cut off all Judah. And I will take the
remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into
the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all
be consumed; in the land of Egypt shall they fall; they
shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine;
they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by
the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an
execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a
13 reproach. For I will punish them that dwell in the land
of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword,
14 by the famine, and by the pestilence: so that none of
the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land
of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that

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9. their wives: read, with LXX, 'their princes.'

they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they [a]have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return save such as shall escape.

[B] Then all the men which knew that their wives 15
burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great assembly, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto 16
us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly perform every word that is 17
gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of [b]victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn 18

[a] Heb. *lift up their soul.* [b] Heb. *bread.*

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12. Cf. xlii. 18.

15. a great assembly: Duhm reads 'with a loud voice' (*qōl* for *qāhāl*).

in Pathros: see on 1. We should read 'and in Pathros,' with the Syriac, explaining Egypt as Lower Egypt; but regard the whole clause 'even . . . Pathros' as an insertion, since it is very unlikely that Jews, especially women, had come from Upper Egypt.

17. the queen of heaven: i. e. Ishtar; see note on vii. 18.

18. since we left off: i. e. apparently at the time of the Reformation, though some think the worship of Ishtar had been resumed in the reign of Jehoiakim; see on this question vol. i, p. 150. The misfortunes that had fallen upon them in quick succession: the untimely death of Josiah; the Egyptian suzerainty and deportation of Jehoahaz to Egypt; the captivity of Jehoiachin and the flower of the nation; the horrors of the second siege; the capture and destruction of Jerusalem; the blinding of the king and execution of so many of the princes; the captivity to Babylon; the murder of Gedaliah and the flight into Egypt; all the long tragic catalogue they naturally from their standpoint attributed to the wrath of the neglected Queen of Heaven.

incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink
offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have
19 been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And
when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and
poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her
cakes to [a] worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto
20 her, without our husbands? [S] Then Jeremiah said
unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, even
to all the people which had given him that answer, saying,
21 The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in
the streets of Jerusalem, ye and your fathers, your kings
and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the
LORD remember them, and came it not into his mind?
22 so that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the
evil of your doings, and because of the abominations

[a] †Or, *pourtray*

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19. From the close of the verse it is clear that the women are speaking, but the Hebrew text of 15 treats the whole speech 16–19 as spoken by the men and the women. The Syriac inserts at the beginning of this verse 'And all the women answered and said.' Whether we should read this, making of course, the consequential change of masculine into feminine in the Hebrew; or whether we should strike out the reference to the men in 15 and so make the whole of 16–19 an address of the women, changing the masculines into feminines throughout, is uncertain; the latter course is perhaps preferable.

to worship her: better, as in margin, 'to pourtray her;' see vol. i, p. 151.

without our husbands. According to the law of vows, Num. xxx. 4–17, women needed their husbands' consent before their vows were valid. The law in its present written form is late, but it probably, like so much in the late legislation, embodies ancient practice. The point is that they have fulfilled the conditions requisite for a vow. If Jeremiah complains, the implication may be, let him settle the matter with the husbands.

20–23 is regarded as secondary by Duhm, who is followed by several scholars. The original answer he finds in 24 ff., the present passage simply reproducing the contents of 2–14.

21. The incense: better 'The sacrifice.'

which ye have committed; therefore is your land become a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is this day. Because ye have burned 23 incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as it is this day.

[B] Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and 24 to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: thus saith the LORD of 25 hosts, the God of Israel, saying: Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and with your hands have fulfilled it, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: establish then

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24. all Judah . . . Egypt: omitted by LXX, probably rightly.

25. Ye and your wives: read with LXX, 'Ye women.' The Hebrew shows that the women are addressed. Ironically he bids them perform their idolatrous vows. We should perhaps read 'establish your words.'

26-28. In its present form the text implies that Yahweh's name will not be used in Egypt by any Jew (26), since all the Jews in Egypt will be completely destroyed (27); a few will escape into Judah, and the Jewish remnant that has come into Egypt shall know whose word shall stand (28). The representation does not hang well together; we have the definite statement of complete extermination modified by the prediction that some will return to Judah, and the wording of 28^b most naturally suggests that the Jews who are in Egypt will know whose word stands, though this remnant has disappeared. We have a similar contradiction in 14. Duhm thinks that in its original form Jeremiah continued his ironical address: 'And let Yahweh's name be no more spoken in the oath, As Yahweh liveth,' meaning let them abandon the worship of Yahweh altogether. Similarly Erbt and Cornill. This was changed into the prediction in the present text; 27 was added in explanation. 28^a was added by the hand to which we owe 14^b, but 28^b is substantially from the memoirs giving the close of Jeremiah's address.

26 your vows, and perform your vows. [BS] Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt: Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land
27 of Egypt, saying, As the Lord GOD liveth. Behold, I watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there
28 be an end of them. And they that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know
29 whose word shall stand, mine, or theirs. And this shall be the sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall
30 surely stand against you for evil: thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

29, 30. According to the statement of Herodotus (ii. 161–163, 169), Hophra or, as Herodotus calls him, Apries, in consequence of an unsuccessful expedition against Cyrene, was dethroned by Amasis, who although desirous of sparing him, had to give him up to the people, who strangled him. This narrative is accepted by many scholars, but rejected by Wiedemann, who is followed by Cornill. If the story is correct, the present prophecy in its apparent distinction of the enemies of Hophra from Nebuchadnezzar agrees with history, so closely in fact that several regard it as either composed or brought into its present form after the event. The reign of Hophra ended about 570 B.C. In 568, when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt, Amasis was on the throne. Hophra's death took place in 564.

[**B**] The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto **45**

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xlv. Rebuke and Promise Addressed to Baruch.

According to the title this oracle dates from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when the prophet's secretary wrote the roll. Its authenticity was doubted by Reuss and Schwally, but it has been accepted by all recent expositors. Its apparently insignificant character is enough to refute the theory that it is a work of imagination. But several writers do not accept the fourth year of Jehoiakim as the date of its origin. It contemplates a life of exile for Baruch as impending or already begun. Trouble upon trouble had already been his portion. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the prophet rather contemplated the possibility that his people might repent and exile be averted. Its position in the book is also thought to indicate a later origin. Duhm says its proper place would have been after xxxvi. 4, but it is not probable that xxxvi included anything of the kind. These arguments, however, are by no means decisive. It is true that Jeremiah wrote the roll in the hope that his people might repent, but though it was his duty to hope against hope and labour to the last, he was under no illusion as to the likelihood of repentance. He expected the worst. And the contents of the roll were such as to fill Baruch with the liveliest sorrow for the doom that was hanging over the nation; it was composed entirely of oracles of denunciation and disaster, such as ought to have caused its hearers to rend their clothes, and which actually roused the king to a fury that would have been fatal not simply to the roll itself, but to author and scribe. And a personal prophecy of this kind would have been quite out of place in xxxvi. It would have ruined the progress of the narrative by introducing an irrelevant element, when all attention was to be concentrated on the effect produced by the roll. Its position at the close of Baruch's memoirs is to be explained by the author's modesty rather than by chronological considerations. These arguments, then, do not negative the evidence of the title. It must be owned, however, that the title itself presents difficulties. The clause 'when he wrote these words' should refer to a prophecy or narrative which immediately precedes; hence it might be argued that xlv really succeeded xliv in point of time, since we may not unreasonably suppose that its position at the end of the memoirs was due to Baruch himself. But this simply means that the data of the title are conflicting, and it is much less violent to read 'the words' than to strike out the date. So far as the contents of the chapter are concerned they might suit a later date, whether in the closing years of Zedekiah, as Köberle thinks, or after the destruction of Jerusalem, as Giesebrecht, Duhm, Erbt, and Gillies suppose. Cornill, who has written by far the most penetrating and sugges-

Baruch the son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year

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tive study of the chapter, holds fast to the date in the title, and thinks that only thus does the real significance of the oracle get its true appreciation. He sets aside as unworthy the interpretation that Baruch was complaining over his personal troubles and the uncertainty of earning a livelihood. Rather it is the writing of the roll which has filled him with pain. Is there then no hope for anything better? Will Yahweh not repent once more of the evil He thinks of doing to His people? Truly a great thing to ask, but then is not Yahweh He who does great things? It was no ignoble feeling which prompted his complaint, but love to his people and belief in God's mercy. But he failed to see that while it was possible for love and mercy to achieve their end, God would not have denied them scope. For He was the Creator, it was He who had planted, He who had built up. Certainly He did not destroy His own work wantonly or with indifference, but only with pain; if He brings Himself to do it, then no alternative remains to be tried. Man can do nothing but be silent in the presence of so reluctant a resolve. The disaster which is threatened cannot be averted from the guilty people, but Baruch's own life should be spared. With full sympathy Jeremiah entered into the feelings of his disciple; he too had gone through the same experience, and had schooled himself into acceptance of the will of God. Cornill brings out strongly the immense significance of the thought, here for the first time expressed, that the Creator, just because He is the Creator, must be filled with love for His creation. Here it is applied simply to Judah; in Job x. 8 ff. it is extended to the individual man; in Jonah iv. 11 it is expressed in all its greatness and splendour. The interpretation given by Cornill yields a worthy sense, and the present writer can do no other than accept it in the main. He questions, however, whether the language, and especially the exhortation not to seek great things for himself, does not imply an element of personal self-seeking which Cornill does not recognize. While he also agrees that the date in the title is to be preferred, he thinks that the oracle might still bear the same deep meaning if it dated from a later period in Baruch's career.

xlv. 1–5. The word spoken to Baruch when he wrote the roll. Thou hast said, Sorrow is added to my pain, and I find no rest. I am breaking down what I have built, and plucking up what I have planted. And seek no great thing for thyself; I am bringing evil on all flesh, but thy life shall be preserved.

xlv. 1. The title creates difficulties which have been touched upon in the Introduction to the section. 'These words' do not

of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying,
Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel [a] unto thee, 2
O Baruch: Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the 3
LORD hath added sorrow to my pain; [b] I am weary
with my groaning, and I find no rest. Thus shalt thou 4
say unto him, Thus saith the LORD: Behold, that which
I have built will I break down, and that which I have
planted I will pluck up; and this in the whole land.
And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: 5

[a] †Or, *concerning* [b] See Ps. vi. 6.

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suit the memoirs, for Baruch did not write these at the dictation of Jeremiah, nor yet the roll written in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, for that roll was destroyed. Cornill thinks Baruch may have said, 'when I wrote the words of Jeremiah.'

3. Baruch's thoughts are cast in a poetical form; we may suppose that he had expressed them in writing and that Jeremiah had seen his composition. To pain for the fate which hung over his people was added anxiety as to his own lot.

4. Thus . . . him. These words do not harmonize with the preceding, in which Baruch himself, not Jeremiah, is addressed. The simplest expedient is to omit them.

The significance of Yahweh's words is explained in the Introduction to the chapter. If He destroy His own work it can only be with pain and reluctance, and because no alternative is open to Him. If Baruch is oppressed with sorrow, what must be Yahweh's pain?

and this in the whole land. These words are absent in the LXX, and the Hebrew is strange. Probably they are a gloss, intended to explain what it was that Yahweh was destroying. For 'land' it would be better to render 'earth.'

5. It is difficult to avoid the impression that Baruch is here warned against undue personal claims, and in this respect Cornill's otherwise penetrating interpretation seems scarcely to do justice to the terms of the passage. But some of the suggestions made as to the form his claims took are wide of the mark. There is no hint that he expected to play a great part in the affairs of state, or to become a prophet. His desires were rather quite moderate; but in such a time the most ordinary desires may be excessive. He must be satisfied to escape with bare life and a wandering existence. It is noteworthy that in His word to Baruch, Yahweh displays the same sternness, the same exacting demand, the same lack of sympathy and appreciation as to Jeremiah. We may say that what for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

46 [R] The word of the Lord which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.

Baruch achieved by giving to the world his memoirs of Jeremiah was a far greater thing than his most soaring ambition had ever contemplated. Erbt has a very ingenious theory as to the origin of the section. He thinks that it was written after Baruch had finished writing the memoirs of Jeremiah, and that after so much pain, Yahweh still prepares new woes, a Babylonian conquest for the remnant in Egypt. The prophet's days are wellnigh done, but a future still lies before Baruch, not of rest but of toil and constant movement. Separation from his beloved master is impending; for Jeremiah is sending him to Babylon, there to continue his work among the exiles. To Babylon he went and published the story of his master's work. He heard no more of the prophet, hence we learn nothing of the end of his career. This theory, however, does not give any adequate meaning to the Divine reply to his complaint.

xlvi–li. Oracles Against Foreign Nations.

The prophecies contained in these chapters have in recent years been wholly or largely denied to Jeremiah. The most thorough attack on their authenticity was made by Schwally in Stade's *Zeitschrift* for 1888. The same conclusion has been reached by Stade, Wellhausen, and Duhm. Other scholars have recognized interpolation, more or less extensive, while contending for a genuine Jeremianic nucleus. A very general agreement has been reached, especially since Budde's discussion in the *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1878, that the Oracle against Babylon (l. 1—li. 58) is not authentic, though Orelli dissents from this and Rothstein considers that even it may contain some Jeremianic matter. As to xlvi–xlix opinion is greatly divided. Even A. B. Davidson and Köberle consider that the chapters contain a considerable non-Jeremianic element, and critics like Kuenen, Giesebrecht, and Erbt naturally adopt, though with considerable difference in detail, a very similar position. Among recent writers Cornill has the merit of giving the most searching discussion. He claims for Jeremiah a much larger proportion than Giesebrecht does. The question has to be settled for each oracle, but certain general objections to the prophecies considered as a whole call for examination at this point.

Of Egypt: concerning the army of Pharaoh-neco king 2
of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish,

The objection that Jeremiah was not a prophet to the nations has been already discussed (vol. i, pp. 77, 78), and need not detain us. Assuming that, like the older prophets (xxviii. 8), he too was commissioned to speak 'against many countries and against great kingdoms,' we naturally anticipate that such prophecies may be found in the book. We cannot eliminate them on the baseless assumption that Jeremiah was conscious of no mission save to his own people. What then are the positive arguments in disproof of authenticity? Schwally complains that the conception of God is quite other than Jeremiah's; in these chapters He appears throughout as the vengeful Deity, who has dedicated the heathen to unalterable destruction. But the idea of Divine vengeance is not strange to Jeremiah (cf. v. 9, 29); and apart from this it is not really present in these prophecies except in xlvi. 10; though the idea of Divine judgement is, of course, present, and in accordance with the belief that Yahweh stands behind the events of history, the calamities that fall on the nations are assigned to His causation. When Schwally adds that there is no preaching of repentance, apart from which prophecy is unthinkable, we remember Habakkuk and Nahum, and ask what Hebrew prophet ever felt himself called to preach repentance to the heathen? Only in the very late Book of Jonah is there the suggestion of such an idea; but Jonah is a representative of Israel as the Servant of Yahweh entrusted with a mission to the Gentile world. The absence of explicit reference to affairs in Judah, which is another objection, would be amazing if the prophet had not dealt with them over and over again; as it is, such an objection is unmeaning. Nor is it the case that what lies behind the prophecies is simply the antithesis between the people of God and the heathen as such, which was the creation of the exile; or that the author knows nothing of the concrete relations of the peoples. The literary dependence of the prophecies in their present form on post-Jeremianic writings is not to be denied. But this and all the other arguments taken together prove nothing more than that the prophecies are not wholly authentic. They do not forbid us to recognize a substantial Jeremianic nucleus, which has undergone expansion at the hand of later editors. The question whether such an authentic nucleus can be discovered, and, if so, what limits should be set to it, can be answered only through a detailed investigation of the oracles themselves. On their original position in the Book of Jeremiah see the Introduction to xxv. The order of the prophecies differs in the Hebrew and the LXX. It is now generally agreed that the former should be preferred.

which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

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xlvi. The Overthrow of Egypt.

This chapter contains two main divisions: (a) 2–12, (b) 13–28. The former is dated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and its occasion is said to be the defeat of the army of Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish. (On this epoch-making event and its consequences, see vol. i, pp. 18–20.) A prophecy on Egypt, at such a juncture, is what would naturally be expected. Egypt was Judah's suzerain; Babylon the long-announced foe out of the north. In this year the prophet was commissioned to give the nations the cup of Yahweh's fury to drink, and the first of the heathen powers to drink was Egypt (xxv. 15–19). The objections to the authenticity are partly aesthetic; the movement of the piece is not straightforward, but we pass to and fro between the preparation for the fight and its issue. Cornill, on the contrary, considers the description, when restored to its original form, most effective. Literary dependence on post-Jeremianic passages cannot be proved, it may in each case lie on the other side. Nor are the ideas such as are inconsistent with Jeremiah's authorship. Giesebrecht rather grudgingly grants that there may be a genuine nucleus, 'of which remains may be preserved e.g. in verses 7, 8, 5, 6.' But he seems more inclined to regard the whole as an early post-exilic composition. We should probably, however, regard the whole as substantially genuine.

The second oracle, 13–28, is decisively rejected by Giesebrecht on grounds which Cornill regards as so slight that he does not even name them. The same repetition and absence of clear development of the theme, the looseness of the connexion, the absurdity of the metaphor in 18, the impossibility of attributing 26 to Jeremiah, are the main points enumerated by Giesebrecht. Largely they are objections which can be rightly estimated only in a detailed study of the passage. Its date, assuming it to be substantially authentic, is uncertain. It is quite possible that it belongs to the same period as 3–12. But it may date from Jeremiah's residence in Egypt, when he anticipated an invasion by Nebuchadnezzar (xliii. 8–13). This date would be certain if, as Cornill asserts, 17 contained a word-play on the name Hophra (see note).

xlvi. 1. Title to the Oracles concerning the Nations.

2. Concerning the army of Pharaoh smitten at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar.

3–6. Let the soldiers make ready for the battle. Why do they turn back? They are smitten and flee in terror. They have fallen by the Euphrates.

[J] Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to 3
battle. Harness the horses, and get up, ye horsemen, 4

7–12. Who rises up like the Nile? It is Egypt, boasting that it will cover the earth. Horses, chariots, warriors, tribes go forth to battle. But it is Yahweh's day of vengeance; there is no healing for Egypt's wound. The earth is full of Egypt's cry for its fall.

13. Title of an Oracle on Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Egypt.

14–19. Let Egypt prepare for the conflict. Yahweh has overthrown the strong one. The strangers exhort each other to escape to their own country. Call the name of Pharaoh a Crash. One comes eminent as Tabor among the mountains. Let the Egyptians prepare for exile.

20–26. Egypt is a fair heifer, stung by a gadfly; her warriors are like well-fed cowardly calves, they have fled before the enemy. Egypt is like a serpent in the wood before an army of woodcutters. Her dense forest shall be cut down, since it cannot be searched out. Egypt is conquered by the northern people. It will be delivered into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, but shall ultimately be restored as of old.

27, 28. Fear not, Jacob, Servant of Yahweh, for thou shalt be restored and rest in thy land. I will utterly destroy the nations of thy dispersion, but thee I will only chastise.

xlvi. 1. A title to the whole group of oracles.

2. The only part of the verse which belongs to the original oracle is the first words, which are better rendered 'On Egypt;' similarly in the titles to some of the other oracles. The rest of the verse is a note of great historical value, since it alone gives us independent information as to the site of the battle. On Pharaoh Necho see vol. i, pp. 15–19. His reign lasted 610–594 B.C. Carchemish is not Circesium (which lies at the junction of the Chaboras and the Euphrates), with which it used to be identified; but Gargamish, as the Assyrian inscriptions call it, now known as Dschirbâs (other spellings are Dscherâbîs, Jerâbîs, Jirbas, Girbas). It lies on the right bank of the Euphrates, north of Circesium and a little to the north of the junction of the Sagur with the Euphrates. It had been famous as the capital of the Hittites. Nebuchadnezzar was crown prince at the time, but succeeded his father Nabopolassar a little later.

3. The poet, without any preliminary description, plunges us into the heart of the situation. It is the eve of battle, and he bids the warriors make ready for the fray. 'The buckler' is the small rounded shield, the 'shield' is the long shield which protected the whole body.

4. get up, ye horsemen. This is the traditional rendering, but

and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears,
5 put on the coats of mail. Wherefore have I seen it?
they are dismayed and are turned backward; and their
mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and
look not back: terror is on every side, saith the LORD.
6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape;
in the north by the river Euphrates have they stumbled
7 and fallen. [a] Who is this that riseth up like the Nile,
8 whose waters toss themselves like the rivers? Egypt
riseth up like the Nile, and his waters toss themselves
like the rivers: and he saith, I will rise up, I will cover

[a] Or, *Who is this like the Nile that riseth up, like the rivers whose waters toss themselves? Egypt is like the Nile that riseth up &c.*

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most recent commentators render 'mount the steeds.' The command 'furbish the spears' comes in strangely as a direction on the eve of an engagement, and the text has often been suspected. The LXX may have read 'lift high your spears.' Cornill suggests 'arm yourselves with spears' (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 7).

coats of mail. These 'may have consisted of some thick woven material covered with metal scales' (*Enc. Bib.* 606).

5. No sooner are the preparations complete and the battle joined than the army is put to flight.

Wherefore have I seen it? The Hebrew is difficult. The LXX rightly omits the verb, 'Wherefore are they dismayed?' &c. If it is retained, it would be better to render 'Wherefore do I see them to be dismayed?'

terror is on every side: a characteristic expression of Jeremiah's; here very appropriate and effective: see note on vi. 25.

7. The Egyptians were smitten in the north, by Jeremiah's foe from the north, on the banks of the Euphrates. And now, in fine contrast to the Euphrates, comes the Nile. Isaiah had spoken of the waters of the Euphrates, strong and many, overflowing the banks and sweeping into Judah, threatening the very life of the Jewish people (Isa. viii. 7, 8). Jeremiah speaks of the Nile rising, while the waters of its branches toss themselves. The rising of the Nile worked no havoc, but was the condition of its country's fertility. It therefore did not suggest military conquest, like the flooding of the Euphrates, and is aptly chosen as a symbol of Egypt's hollow military pretensions.

8. and his waters . . . rivers: omitted in LXX; several critics strike out also the first clause of the verse. The LXX also the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. Go up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and 9 let the mighty men go forth: Cush and Put, that handle the shield; and the Ludim, that handle and bend the bow. For that day is *a day* of the Lord, the LORD 10 of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour and be satiate, and shall drink its fill of their blood: for the Lord, the LORD of hosts, hath a sacrifice in the north country by

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omits 'the city and,' to the improvement of the sense. It may have arisen out of a reminiscence of xlvii. 2. If it is retained, it is best explained as collective, 'cities,' rather than as referring to any city in particular.

9. This verse may be a continuation of Pharaoh's words, or it may be the prophet himself who incites the contingents of the Egyptian army to the battle which is to end in such swift irretrievable disaster. The former view seems to be preferable. The king urges his hosts to the battle to fulfil his proud boast in the preceding verse. Let the horses prance, let the chariots rush furiously forward, let the soldiers advance to the conflict.

Cush: i. e. Ethiopia. **Put** is probably Punt, a land on the Red Sea. Cush and Put both occur as 'sons of Ham' in Gen. x. 6. The mercenaries from these countries formed the heavy-armed soldiers, and **the Ludim** the archers. The Ludim seem to have been a Libyan people on the west of Egypt; perhaps we should read Lubim, i. e. Libyans, as in Nah. iii. 9, 'Put and Lubim were thy helpers' (Stade). In any case they are not the Lydians of Asia Minor. The three peoples are mentioned similarly in Ezek. xxx. 5.

handle and bend the bow. It would be better to read simply 'bend the bow,' literally 'tread the bow;' 'handle' is a careless repetition from the previous clause.

10. In this verse a note of vengeance is struck, which is not strange when we consider that the untimely death of Josiah and the captivity of Jehoahaz had happened only a few years earlier at Egypt's hands. The passage is very similar to Isa. xxxiv. 6, 8; but, since Isa. xxxiv is a late composition, our passage is probably the original: cf. Zeph. i. 7, Ezek. xxxix. 17-20. The sword is the sword of the enemy, not of Yahweh as the LXX reads under the influence of Isa. xxxiv. 6. Coste (p. 7) prefers the LXX, regarding the Hebrew text as 'due to dogmatic alteration, occasioned by dislike of such an anthropomorphism as "the sword of Yahweh"' (so also xlix. 37, and perhaps xlvii. 6).

11 the river Euphrates. Go up into Gilead, and take balm,
O virgin daughter of Egypt: in vain dost thou use many
12 medicines; there is no healing for thee. The nations
have heard of thy shame, and the earth is full of thy cry:
for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty,
they are fallen both of them together.

13 ⌊R⌋ The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the
prophet, how that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should
come and smite the land of Egypt.

14 [J] Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and
publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, Stand forth,
and prepare thee; for the sword hath devoured round
15 about thee. [a] Why are thy strong ones swept away?

[a] Or, according to some ancient authorities, *Why is thy strong one swept away? he stood not &c.*

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11. The wound of Egypt is incurable: though she go into Gilead to procure its far-famed mastic (viii. 22); though she tries one remedy after another, all are in vain; no physician, though the reputation of her physicians was so high, has compounded a plaister (xxx. 13) which will heal her.

12. thy shame. The LXX reads 'thy voice,' which gives a better parallelism; the change is trifling.

the mighty man . . . the mighty: cf. Lev. xxvi. 37. In the shameful panic described in 5, 6 the warriors tumble over each other in their blind flight from the foe.

14. For the places named in this verse see ii. 16, xliv. 1. It would be better, however, to adopt the shorter text of the LXX, 'Declare ye in Migdol, and publish in Noph,' i. e. in the frontier town and the capital of Lower Egypt. The tenor of the declaration follows: Egypt is bidden stand forth to repel the enemy, whose sword has already devoured the surrounding peoples. For 'round about thee' the LXX seems to have read 'thy thicket,' which is accepted by Schwally and Cornill. This is supported by the simile in 22, 23, but it is very questionable if it yields a satisfactory sense. It would be necessary to render 'is devouring,' since if the thicket had already been cut down the day for defence would have gone by.

15. The Hebrew reads the singular, except in the word rendered 'thy strong ones,' for which the singular should no doubt be substituted, with several Versions and more than sixty Hebrew

they stood not, because the Lord did [a] drive them.
He made many to stumble, yea, they fell one upon 16
another: and they said, Arise, and let us go again to our
own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the
oppressing sword. They cried there, Pharaoh king of 17

[a] †Or, *thrust them down*

MSS. The text, however, needs a further alteration. The verb rendered ‘swept away’ is really two words written as one; the LXX gives us the correct text, ‘Why is Apis fled? Thy strong one stood not, because the Lord did thrust him down.’ Apis was the sacred bull, in which Osiris was believed to be incarnate. The god of Egypt cannot stand before the assault of the Babylonians (cf. Isa. xix. 1, xlvi. 1, 2, and x. 4, if we are to read with Lagarde, ‘Beltis bows down, Osiris is broken’). ‘Thy strong one’ is then a synonym for Apis; the Hebrew word is often used for bulls. In viii. 16, xlvii. 3, it is used of horses, so also l. 11.

16. The reference to a return home shows that the speakers are foreigners; apparently not the mercenaries but traders: cf. Isa. xiii. 14. But this does not suit the present text, for a reference to the foreigners should have preceded. Giesebrecht, with a slight emendation (*‘erb*^{e}*ka* for *hirbāh* and *kāshal* for *kōshēl*), reads ‘Thy mingled people have stumbled and fallen, and they said one to another, Arise,’ &c. This is supported by the LXX, accepted by Duhm, Erbt, and Driver, and is probably correct. For ‘the mingled people’ cf. l. 37, Ezek. xxx. 5, 1 Kings x. 15, and the note on xxv. 20. Cornill is dissatisfied with this, since the insertion of the foreigners seems to him unsuitable here. He supposes that Jeremiah is still referring to Apis; and, eliminating the greater part of the verse, reads ‘He hath sorely stumbled, yea fallen, before the oppressing sword.’

17. A difficult verse. We should read, with a different pointing, ‘Call ye the name of Pharaoh’ (so LXX). They are to call him *shā’ōn he‘ĕbir hammo‘ed.* This name apparently contains a play on the king’s name: if so, the second word must refer to Hophra, whose name in Egyptian is Uaḥ-ab-ra: cf. for a similar contemptuous word-play on Egypt Isa. xxx. 7. The obscurity of the clause is probably due to the difficulty of getting a satisfactory word-play on the name. Cornill argues that the prophecy must be contemporaneous with Hophra, and if so, certainly authentic. This is on the whole probable, though Duhm considers the verse to be a marginal gloss, and Giesebrecht says that a later Rabbi could quite well have perpetrated a witticism of this kind. Even Rothstein, who regards the passage as Jeremianic, thinks that this sentence is quite prosaic and certainly does not belong to the

Egypt is but a noise; he hath let the appointed time pass
18 by. As I live, saith the King, whose name is the LORD
of hosts, surely like Tabor among the mountains, and like
19 Carmel by the sea, so shall he come. [a] O thou daughter
that dwellest in Egypt, [b] furnish thyself to go into captivity:
for Noph shall become a desolation, and shall be
20 burnt up, without inhabitant. Egypt is a very fair heifer;

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[a] Or, *O thou that dwellest with the daughter of Egypt*

[b] Heb. *make thee vessels of captivity.*

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original text, and passes the same judgement on 18. But a later writer would be likely to know that the king who was reigning when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt was Amasis. The meaning of the name is not clear; 'a Crash, who has let the appointed time pass by' is perhaps the best rendering. He has let the time go by when he might have secured himself against this calamity; or perhaps better, He has let the time in which the Divine mercy might have been granted pass by.

18. As Tabor towers high over the mountains, and as Carmel rises sheer above the sea, so the foe who comes on Egypt will overtop other conquerors. Tabor is not the loftiest mountain of Palestine, but it makes the impression of great height because it rises from the plain; and similarly Carmel by the sea, though its actual height is only about 600 feet. The metaphor was perhaps suggested to Jeremiah by the flatness of Egypt, which was such a contrast to Palestine. The conqueror is not named; Nebuchadnezzar is intended. If the passage is late, Schmidt's suggestion that he is Alexander the Great is plausible.

19. O thou daughter. The population of Egypt is addressed, and bidden get ready the 'vessels of captivity' (see margin), i. e. the necessaries for a journey such as food and utensils (in Ezek. xii. 3 the same phrase is translated 'prepare thee stuff for removing'). Such preparations are imposed on the inhabitants by the destruction of Memphis, the capital.

20. In a fresh metaphor the poet describes the disaster of Egypt. She is 'a graceful heifer' (for this rendering see Driver, p. 368), well-nourished and finely proportioned, but a gadfly has come upon her, stinging her into flight. This, since Hitzig, is the generally accepted view, though the rendering 'gadfly' is not universally accepted. Cornill corrects the text and reads 'a herdsman (*bōqēr*) from the north shall become her master (*b*^{e}*ʿālāh*).' He thinks a personal designation more suitable to the connexion. He also transposes the last part of 21, 'for the day . . . visitation,'

but [a] destruction out of the north is come, [b] it is come.
Also her hired men in the midst of her are like calves of 21
the stall; for they also are turned back, they are fled
away together, they did not stand: for the day of their
calamity is come upon them, the time of their visitation.
[c] The sound thereof shall go like the serpent; for they shall 22
march with an army, and come against her with axes, as

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[a] †Or, *the gadfly*

[b] †Or, according to many ancient authorities, *upon her*

[c] †Or, *Her sound is like that of the serpent as it goeth*

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to the close of this verse, to secure a better balance of the two similes, and because the reference to visitation suits Egypt herself better than her mercenaries.

21. The mercenaries who were hired to fight proved useless in the day of conflict. For they were pampered like calves fed up in the stalls, and were thus utterly unfit for the stern realities of warfare. The mercenaries here mentioned are not those of 9, but the Ionians and Carians, introduced into his service by Psammetichus, and retained by his successors. Hophra did not send them on the expedition against Cyrene; they failed to secure him victory over Amasis (Herodotus ii. 152 ff.).

22, 23. These verses are obscure. If we leave the text as we have it, but adopt the rendering in the margin, 23^{a} seems to mean either that Egypt's movement in retreat is inaudible, like the rustle of the serpent as it glides through the wood, not like the tramp of a mighty host, or else that Egypt's moan after her defeat is as inaudible. In either case the point is the weakness of Egypt. The former is perhaps the better. The LXX, however, instead of 'the serpent as it goeth,' reads 'a hissing serpent.' This is probably to be preferred. Egypt is like a serpent driven back from its lair by the advance of the woodmen; it can offer no more resistance than an impotent hiss of defiance. The metaphor is all the more appropriate since the serpent holds so conspicuous a place in the royal insignia of Egypt. Cornill thinks that 23^{b} should be attached to 22^{a}. It is not so suitable in its present position, but follows 22^{a} admirably and is equally in place before 22^{b}. In 22^{b}, 23^{a} the foe is described as approaching with axes, and cutting down Egypt as a dense, impenetrable forest, so thickly populated was it. It is disputed whether the Babylonians actually used battle-axes; if they did use them this might have suggested the metaphor to the prophet.

23 hewers of wood. They shall cut down her forest, saith
the LORD, [a] though it cannot be searched; because they
24 are more than the locusts, and are innumerable. The
daughter of Egypt shall be put to shame; she shall be
25 delivered into the hand of the people of the north. The
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith: Behold, I will
punish Amon of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with her
gods, and her kings; even Pharaoh, and them that trust
26 in him: and I will deliver them into the hand of those
that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar
king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and
afterwards it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old,
27 saith the LORD. [S] [b] But fear not thou, O Jacob my
servant, neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save
thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity;
and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at
28 ease, and none shall make him afraid. Fear not thou, O

[a] †Or, *for*

[b] See ch. xxx. 10, 11.

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hewers: better 'gatherers,' though a slight alteration would give 'hewers,' which is much more appropriate.

They shall cut down. The verb is better pointed as an imperative 'Cut down,' as in vi. 6.

25. The LXX gives a much shorter and better text. It omits 'The LORD . . . saith,' also 'and Pharaoh . . . her kings.' For 'Amon of No' the LXX reads 'Amon in No.' Amon was the god of No, i.e. of the Egyptian Thebes: cf. Nah. iii. 8, Ezek. xxx. 14–16.

them that trust in him. Jeremiah has specially in mind the Jews whose inveterate trust in Egypt is once more doomed to disappointment.

26. This verse is absent in the LXX, and regarded by several as a later insertion. Cornill treats it as in the main genuine. He says that 26^a must be earlier than Nebuchadnezzar's expedition, since matters turned out otherwise than as predicted, and the closing promise to Egypt is supported by Ezek. xxix. 13, 14, where after forty years' desolation Egypt is to be repeopled.

27, 28. These verses are also found in xxx. 10, 11, and are discussed there.

Jacob my servant, saith the LORD; for I am with thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee with judgement, and will in no wise [a] leave thee unpunished.

[R] The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the **47**

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[a] Or, *hold thee guiltless*

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xlvii. ORACLE ON THE PHILISTINES.

The authenticity of this oracle has been denied by those who reject all the oracles on foreign nations, also by Gillies who thinks nothing is authentic in this section except parts of xlvi. Those who are prepared to recognize a Jeremianic nucleus in this section of the book usually take the present oracle to be by Jeremiah. And there is no substantial objection to this. Moreover, as Cornill points out, this oracle seems to be quite independent of other prophecies on the Philistines, the points of contact with them being too slight to justify any theory of dependence. Had it been a late composition it would probably have borrowed not a little from its predecessors. The date must be determined primarily from the prophecy itself; it belongs to the same period as most of the series, i. e. the fourth year of Jehoiakim (xlvi. 2), and the army which is to come on Philistia from the north is that of Nebuchadnezzar, the victor at Carchemish. The title, it is true, suggests a different occasion, a conquest of Gaza by a king of Egypt. According to Herodotus (II. 159), Pharaoh Necho after the battle at Magdolos, i. e. Megiddo, captured Kadytis, which since Hitzig's Dissertation on the subject (1829) has been generally identified with Gaza. And it is in fact probable that this is intended in 1, for that he 'smote Gaza' on his retreat from Carchemish is highly improbable; and we have no evidence to support the theory that Pharaoh Hophra conquered Gaza on his expedition against Phoenicia (Herod. II. 161). But if the title refers to the capture of Gaza in 608 B. C. we must ascribe the chronological notice to an editor, who took the mention of Gaza in 5 as referring to that event. This is supported by the fact that it is missing in the LXX, which reads simply, 'On the Philistines.' Duhm assigns it to the author of xlvi, and therefore at the earliest to the second half of the second century B. C. Schmidt dates it in the time of Alexander the Great, 'though the editor may have thought of the conquest of Gaza (defended by Demetrius) by Ptolemy in 312' (*Enc. Bib.* 2391). Erbt regards 6, 7 as certainly authentic, 2 may or may not be, 3-5 he takes to be editorial.

prophet concerning the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza.

2 [J] Thus saith the LORD: Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall become an overflowing stream, and shall overflow the land and all that is therein, the city and them that dwell therein: and the men shall cry, and
3 all the inhabitants of the land shall howl. At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong ones, at the rushing of his chariots, at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers look not back to their children for feebleness of hands;
4 because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines,

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xlvii. 1. Title and date.

2–7. A flood rises out of the north and will overwhelm the land. The rush of horses and chariots causes the fathers for weakness to forget their children, since Philistia and Phoenicia are spoiled. The cities of Philistia mourn. How long, sword of Yahweh, ere thou be quiet? Return to thy scabbard, and be still. How can it be quiet, seeing Yahweh has appointed its mission?

xlvii. 1. See the Introduction to the chapter.

2. Cf. Isa. viii. 7, 8. The waters, i. e. the invading army, come from the north; the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar are intended. During the summer many of the water-courses of Palestine are dry, but in the rainy season they quickly fill with raging torrents, which overflow their banks.

and the men . . . howl: struck out as an insertion by Cornill and Rothstein. It is criticized on metrical and stylistic grounds, and as introducing an eschatological element, foreign to the passage.

3. Such is the terror inspired by the wild rush of the foe's steeds and war-chariots, that even the fathers are unnerved and leave their children behind them in their panic-stricken flight. Giesebrecht, on metrical grounds, regards 'At the noise . . . wheels' as an insertion. The description would be impoverished by the omission. Cornill cures the metrical irregularity by omitting 'at the rushing of his chariots.'

4. The text is again uncertain. If it is correct, the R.V. gives the probable sense: the Philistines, the sole remaining help of the Phoenicians, are cut off. That they really sustained a relation of such importance to Tyre and Sidon is improbable. The word rendered 'that remaineth' means properly 'a survivor,' one who escapes from disaster, and this does not suit 'to cut off;' besides to cut off from Tyre and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the [a] isle of Caphtor. Baldness is come upon Gaza; 5

[a] Or, *sea coast*

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a survivor is not well qualified to act the part of a helper. Cornill reads 'and to cut off for Tyre and Sidon the whole remnant of their strength.' This had been given by Duhm as the original of the LXX, and is to be preferred to his own emendation. The incidental and unexpected mention of the Phoenicians seems to the present writer a suspicious feature. This would be somewhat mitigated, though by no means removed, if with Duhm we continued 'for Yahweh will spoil the whole remnant of the isles.' The LXX supports this. Cornill and Giesebrecht keep the Hebrew text, but regard the clause as a gloss, a judgement Rothstein extends to the whole verse. Caphtor is probably Crete, from which the Philistines originally came. Caphtor is named as their original home in Amos ix. 7, Deut. ii. 23 (in the latter passage they are described as Caphtorim); the identification of Caphtor with Crete is supported by the name Cherethites given to the Philistines (1 Sam. xxx. 14, Ezek. xxv. 16, Zeph. ii. 5).

5. For the mourning customs here mentioned see note on xvi. 6. Gaza is mentioned first of the Philistine towns, as in Zeph. ii. 4, where the order is geographical, proceeding from south to north: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron. It was a very important city, since it stood at the junction of the caravan road from Arabia and that from Egypt. It has still a considerable population. Cornill corrects Ashkelon into Ashdod. It is true that the omission of Ashdod is surprising, and that Ashkelon is mentioned in 7 (but see notes on 6, 7). The two names begin similarly, but the substitution of one for the other is precarious. It would be better, with Rothstein, to insert it before Ashkelon (but see below), and suppose that it has fallen out through the similarity of the two words. It is generally agreed that 'the remnant of their valley' is incorrect, since it is unsuitable; 'valley' is not a fitting designation of the Philistine plain, and we expect a proper name. This is given by the LXX 'the remnant of the Anakim' (a difference of one consonant). The Anakim were a race of giants (Num. xiii. 22, 28, 33: cf. Gen. vi. 4; Deut. i. 28, ii. 10, ix. 2; Joshua xi. 21, 22, xiv. 12-15, xv. 13, 14); they are connected with Hebron, but also according to Joshua xi. 22 with Philistia. This emendation is accepted by most modern scholars. Adopting the suggestion that Ashdod should be inserted in the text, it would be better, since no Anakim were left in Ashkelon, but only in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (Joshua xi. 22), to insert it after Ashkelon rather than

Ashkelon is brought to nought, the remnant of their
6 valley: how long wilt thou cut thyself? O thou sword of
the LORD, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up
7 thyself into thy scabbard; rest, and be still. How canst
thou be quiet, seeing the LORD hath given [a] thee a
charge? against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore,
there hath he appointed it.

48 Of Moab. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of

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[a] Heb. *it*.

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before it. The verse would then read 'Baldness is come upon Gaza; Ashkelon is brought to nought; Ashdod, remnant of the Anakim, how long wilt thou cut thyself?' Cornill reads 'remnant of Ekron,' which had been previously suggested by Krochmal. In some ways this is preferable, but it is a more difficult emendation and has no attestation.

cut thyself. There may be a play in the Hebrew verb *tithgodādī* on the name of Gath. But this is not very probable. Gath is omitted in Zeph. ii. 4, and had perhaps been destroyed.

6, 7. These verses are separated from the preceding by some scholars, partly on metrical grounds. Giesebrecht treats them as an obvious addition, on account of 'the sword of Yahweh:' cf. xlvi. 10. But if this is objectionable we might simply read 'the sword.' There is no convincing reason for detaching the verses from their context. Verse 6 is apparently the cry of the Philistines; 7 the answer of the prophet. For 'How canst thou' we should read with the Versions 'How can it,' and of course with the margin, 'given it a charge.' 'The sea shore' is the Philistine coast· the Phoenician coast may perhaps be included.

xlviii. ORACLE ON MOAB.

This section arouses suspicion both by its length in contrast to the other oracles in xlvi–xlix, and its use of earlier prophecies, especially Isa. xv, xvi. Movers and Hitzig both assumed that the chapter contained a good deal of secondary matter, the former attributing twenty verses to the supplementer, Hitzig twenty-three. They agreed largely, though not completely, as to the verses which should be treated as secondary. Graf confessed that Jeremiah would not lose if such interpolation were admitted, but he considered that the reasons alleged for excision were insufficient. Kuenen assigned sixteen verses to the editor. All three agreed in regarding 29–38 (Hitzig 38[a]), 43–46 as editorial. Giesebrecht, Israel: Woe unto Nebo! for it is laid waste; Kiriathaim

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after a detailed examination, left a few verses which might be genuine, but in view of the fact that they were in harmony with the rest of the chapter he considered it to be arbitrary to separate them from their context and treated the whole as spurious. Cornill and Rothstein agree that there is a genuine Jeremianic nucleus, though they reconstruct it very differently. Schmidt brings the chapter down to the reign of John Hyrcanus; and Duhm, on the ground that it draws upon very late passages, says that it can hardly be older than the close of the second century B. C. Even Köberle omits it. The question can be dealt with to profit only in the detailed discussion of the chapter. But one general remark may be made here. Admitting that Jeremiah uttered oracles on the foreign nations, it is fairly certain that Moab would be included. If then we find an oracle on Moab in this section, there is a presumption that it contains at least a genuine nucleus, which may have suffered expansion; it is not antecedently probable that it should be entirely spurious. At the same time, in view of the length and diffuseness of the oracle, the prosaic character of some of its parts, the extensive borrowing from earlier writers, the animosity which seems at a later period to have been felt for Moab (Isa. xxv. 10-12), there is a strong presumption that the original oracle, if such can be found, has been much expanded.

The chapter is remarkable for the large number of place-names contained in it, a feature that it has in common with the oracle on Moab in Isa. xv, xvi, from which it has borrowed so extensively. The sites of some are unknown, and of some more than one identification has been proposed, in yet other cases the text is suspicious.

xlviii. 1-10. Yahweh announces the overthrow of Moab and its cities; let the inhabitants save themselves by flight. Chemosh and his people shall go into exile, and the land become a desolation. Cursed be he that doeth this work of Yahweh negligently.

11-19. Moab has been left undisturbed from his youth, and his character has not been disciplined by unsettlement; now he will be driven out of his land, and his trust in Chemosh will be put to shame. His warriors are slain, and the wail is raised over him: The strong staff is broken; Dibon's glory is humbled; Aroer asks the fugitives for tidings.

20-28. Moab is spoiled, judgement has come on all his cities. Moab has vaunted himself against Yahweh, and shall be made a derision, as he had held Israel in derision. Let the inhabitants take refuge in the rocks.

29-39. We have heard of Moab's pride. I will wail for the ruin of its vineyards. The whole land utters its cry. The wor-

is put to shame, it is taken: [a] Misgab is put to shame
2 and [b] broken down. The praise of Moab is no more; in
Heshbon they have devised evil against her, Come, and
let us cut her off from being a nation. Thou also, O
Madmen, shalt be brought to silence; the sword shall

[a] †Or, *the high fort*

[b] †Or, *dismayed*

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shippers are cut off. I am sore grieved for Moab; its inhabitants are all in mourning, for Moab is broken, a derision to all around him.

40–47. The conqueror swoops on Moab like a griffon, and destroys it for its arrogance against Yahweh; none shall escape death or exile. Yet Moab's fortune shall be reversed in the latter days.

xlviii. 1. Nebo is not Mount Nebo, but a hill-town, perhaps on or near the mountain. It is mentioned in Num. xxxii. 3, 38, Isa. xv. 2, and on the Moabite Stone. **Kiriathaim** is probably to be identified with Kureyat, which lies ten miles to the north of the River Arnon, and six to the north of Dibon, ten to the east of the Dead Sea, and four to the south-west of Jebel Atarus.

Misgab . . . dismayed. Misgab is mentioned nowhere else, and is perhaps to be rendered 'the high fort,' as in Isa. xxv. 12, in which case Kir-heres (31, 36) may be intended. Duhm thinks we should substitute Moab; Giesebrecht suggests Ar-Moab; Cheyne (*Enc. Bib.* 3153) omits 'it is taken . . . shame and' as due to dittography. Rothstein reaches the same result by a different route. The repetition of 'is put to shame' is probably due to an error, and the Hebrew at the close of the verse is strange.

2. Heshbon, now Hesban, was a famous city of Moab, about four miles to the north-east of Mount Nebo, twenty-five to the north of the Arnon, and sixteen east of the Jordan. It was the city of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who had taken all the territory of Moab down to the Arnon (Num. xxi. 26) and then lost it to the Hebrews; at a later time the Moabites regained possession of it, as we gather from Isa. xv. 2, xvi. 8, 9. The verb rendered 'devised' contains a play on Heshbon, similarly with Madmen and 'brought to silence.' Madmen, however, is otherwise unknown, and we should probably read, with LXX, Syr., and Vulg., 'Thou also shalt be utterly brought to silence.' Cheyne reads Nimrim (*Enc. Bib.* 2892, 3147). Since Heshbon was a city of Moab, some think the statement in the text that they plan evil against Moab in Heshbon is meaningless, and emend the text. Giesebrecht's is perhaps the best correction, 'Against Heshbon they have devised evil.' But the present text is satisfactory: the invaders, entering

pursue thee. The sound of a cry from Horonaim, spoil- 3
ing and great destruction! [S] Moab is destroyed; her little 4
ones have caused a cry to be heard. [a] For by the ascent 5
of Luhith with continual weeping shall they go up; for
in the going down of Horonaim they have heard the dis-
tress of the cry of destruction. [J] Flee, save your lives, and 6

[a] See Isa. xv. 5.

Moab from the north, occupy Heshbon and plan the continuance of their campaign.

3. The position of Horonaim is uncertain. Cheyne places it 'near the south border of Moab, on one of the roads leading down from the Moabite plateau to the Jordan valley' (*Enc. Bib.* 2113), and a similar view is taken by several scholars. Cornill adopts the identification, but thinks that a place more to the north is needed, which bears the brunt of the invasion from the north; he reads 'from Abarim' as in xxii. 20, 'cry from Abarim' (see note). On G. A. Smith's map of Palestine Horonaim is placed (with a query) about one and a half miles from the north east end of the Dead Sea. If this identification were correct, Cornill's objection would be met.

4. her little ones . . . heard. We should read, with the LXX and a few Hebrew MSS., 'they make a cry to be heard unto Zoar:' cf. Isa. xv. 5. Zoar lay at the south-east extremity of the Dead Sea, the cry of the Moabites thus rings from north to south of the land. Possibly, however, for Moab we should read Ar of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), a city on the south bank of the Arnon, since in the list of Moabite towns the mention of Moab itself is surprising.

5. This verse is largely taken from Isa. xv. 5, which had already influenced 4. Both verses are probably non-Jeremianic. The ascent of Luhith is said to lie between Rabbath-Moab and Zoar; it was apparently in the neighbourhood of Horonaim (see 3). It is identified by some with Sarfa, north of the Wady Kerak. Its mention in a Nabataean inscription found in Moab is doubtful. Cheyne reads here 'the ascent of Eglaim.' Omit 'continual' and 'the distress of.'

6. This exhortation to the Moabites to save themselves by flight is probably corrupt in the latter part. On the word rendered 'heath' see note on xvii. 6; if a tree is intended here we should probably render 'dwarf juniper,' and explain the metaphor as indicating the starved and destitute condition of the fugitives. But the expression is undeniably strange, and since the translation 'destitute' is unsatisfactory, and 'Aroer,' which the word also

7 be like [a] the heath in the wilderness. For, because thou
hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou also
shalt be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into cap-
8 tivity, his priests and his princes together. [S] And the
spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall
escape; the valley also shall perish, and [b] the plain shall be
9 destroyed; as the LORD hath spoken. Give wings unto
Moab, [c] that she may fly and get her away: and her cities
shall become a desolation, without any to dwell therein.

[a] See ch. xvii. 6. [b] See Joshua xiii. 9, 17, 21.
[c] Or, *for she must fly: and her cities &c.*

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means, is not in the wilderness, several scholars suspect the text. The LXX reads 'the wild ass' (*ʿārōd*), as in Job xxxix. 5; the word is probably a loan-word from Aramaic, and the sense is not unsatisfactory, the wild ass being very shy and difficult to capture. Cornill accepts this, but thinks the verb is corrupt and several objections may be urged against it. Duhm thinks on account of xvii. 6 that the noun is correct, but slightly altering the verb gets the sense 'and preserve it (i.e. your life) like the dwarf juniper in the wilderness.' This is recommended by the fact that it retains the play on Aroer the Moabite city (19).

7. thy works . . . treasures. If the text is correct, 'works' may mean the deeds of Moab, or the things she has made, or, as the word sometimes means, her idols. But the LXX reads one noun only and renders 'strongholds,' which should be accepted (see 41), either in lieu of both nouns, or of the former only.

Chemosh: the national god of Moab, often mentioned as such in the O.T. and on the Moabite Stone. For his deportation into exile cf. Isa. xlvi. 1, 2. A victory over a people was a victory over its god. For the latter part of the verse cf. Amos i. 15, 'their king' being taken apparently to mean the god of Ammon, i.e. Milcom: cf. xlix. 3.

8–10. Cornill treats these verses as non-Jeremianic; Rothstein retains 9^b 'and her cities . . . therein' for the prophet. A sentiment like that in 10 (cf. Judges v. 23) cannot well be attributed to Jeremiah, the Hebrew of 8 is unusual, and the meaning of 9^a is very uncertain.

8. the valley is the valley of the Jordan as it opens out near the Dead Sea, while **the plain** is the table-land of Moab on which its cities for the most part lay.

9. The R.V. probably gives the general sense of the first clause, though the rendering 'wings' is justified only by later

Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD [a] negli- 10
gently, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword
from blood. [J] Moab hath been at ease from his youth, 11
and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emp-
tied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into
captivity: therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his
scent is not changed. Therefore, behold, the days come, 12
saith the LORD, that I will send unto him them that
[b] pour off, and they shall [b] pour him off; and they shall
empty his vessels, and break their [c] bottles in pieces.
And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house 13

[a] Or, *deceitfully* [b] †Heb. *tilt* (a vessel). [c] †Or, *jars*

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usage. We should render, with Driver, 'Give wings unto Moab, for she would fain fly away:' cf. 28. It seems to be spoken in mockery.

10. This bloodthirsty verse is surely not Jeremiah's. It was Hildebrand's favourite quotation.

11. The metaphor is well worthy of Jeremiah. Moab had led a much more settled life than Israel; it had, of course, suffered from invasion and foreign dominion, but not from exile. It had been like wine suffered to remain on the lees, and not poured from vessel to vessel. And the effect of this had been that the quality of the lees was more and more communicated to the wine. If the wine was good it was thus improved (cf. Isa. xxv. 6), but if inferior it deteriorated (cf. Zeph. i. 12). Moab had suffered by its freedom from the discipline of removal, its character had not been enriched by new experience, it had become more and more obstinately settled in its native characteristics, its 'taste' and 'scent,' learning nothing, forgetting nothing.

12. This long-continued freedom from disturbance is at last to end. Yahweh 'will send unto him tilters, and they shall tilt him,' empty the wine from the vessels and break the jars in pieces. In other words, he is to be thrown into exile. Since Jeremiah expected the catastrophe in the immediate future, we should probably omit the opening words of the verse which relegate it to an indefinite future.

13. Then Moab's trust in Chemosh will experience a bitter disillusion, as Israel had vainly trusted in Beth-el (cf. Amos v. 5). At Beth-el there was the golden bull, the symbol of Yahweh; and this, or perhaps the pillar of Jacob, is here intended as the object of Israel's trust. That the writer should refer to Beth-el rather

14 of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence. How
say ye, We are mighty men, and valiant men for the war?
15 Moab is laid waste, and [a] they are gone up into her cities,
and his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter,
16 saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts. The
calamity of Moab is near to come, and his affliction hast-
17 eth fast. All ye that are round about him, bemoan him,
and all ye that know his name; say, How is the strong
18 [b] staff broken, the beautiful rod! O thou daughter that
[c] dwellest in Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in

[a] Or, *her cities are gone up* in smoke

[b] Or, *sceptre*

[c] Or, *art seated*

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than Jerusalem, suggests that the overthrow of the latter had not yet occurred, a noteworthy proof that the chapter contains a pre-exilic element.

ashamed of: i. e. disappointed in, see on ii. 26 and cf. ii. 36, xii. 13, a very clear case of the meaning, xiv. 3.

14. Cf. viii. 8, Isa. xix. 11.

15. This is a difficult verse, the Hebrew is strange; the LXX omits a good deal, and differs in the text of what it retains. It would perhaps be simplest to read much as in 18, 'The spoiler of Moab is come up against him, and his,' &c., though several other emendations have been suggested. The verse may perhaps be editorial.

16. Cf. Isa. xiii. 22, Deut. xxxii. 35.

17. The neighbouring peoples are summoned to raise the lament over Moab's downfall. For the words of the lament, introduced with the characteristic 'How' (Isa. i. 21; Lam. i. 1, ii. 1, iv. 1), cf. Isa. xiv. 5, 6.

18. Cf. xiii. 18, Isa. xlvii. 1. Dibon (now Diban) was four miles north of the Arnon, three north of Aroer, and thirteen east of the Dead Sea. It was situated on two hills, and from that proud eminence is bidden to come down (cf. Matt. xi. 23). It was at Dibon that the Moabite Stone was discovered in 1868; Mesha, whose victories over Israel it recounts, dwelt there.

sit in thirst. This expression has no parallel: the English suggests a sense that the Hebrew can hardly bear. The explanation 'sit on the thirsty ground,' which could be gained by alteration of the pointing, is also improbable; and the text is apparently corrupt: the LXX read differently. The sense expected is 'in the dust' or 'on the ground;' the latter is nearer the Hebrew, but

thirst; for the spoiler of Moab is come up against thee,
he hath destroyed thy strong holds. O [a] inhabitant of 19
Aroer, stand by the way, and espy: ask him that fleeth,
and her that escapeth; say, What hath been done?
Moab is put to shame; for it is [b] broken down: howl and 20
cry; [S] tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is laid waste.

[a] Heb. *inhabitress.* [b] †Or, *dismayed*

Cornill's 'in filth' is nearer still. Another suggestion is 'in the mire,' which is favoured by the LXX. Isa. xxv. 10, 11 may perhaps be compared.

19. Aroer. Three cities of this name are mentioned in the O.T. The city intended here is the Moabite Aroer (now 'Ara'ir), about half a mile north of the Arnon, three or four miles south-south-west of Dibon, though very much lower, and eleven east of the Dead Sea. Thus it lay between Dibon and the Arnon, so that its inhabitants could question the fugitives as they escaped to 'the fords of Arnon' (Isa. xvi. 2).

20–24. The answer to the question of 19 seems to be given in the first part of 20. With the second part of this verse the Qina rhythm is abandoned, and in 21–24 we have a prosaic catalogue of cities which can hardly belong to the original poem. Accordingly we must regard 20^b–24 as a late insertion. The Arnon is probably the river of that name; it would be better to render 'by the Arnon.' Holon and Beth-gamul are mentioned nowhere else. Dibon, Beth-diblathaim, Beth-meon, Kerioth, Bozrah, Jahzah are mentioned on the Moabite Stone. Beth-diblathaim is not named elsewhere in the O.T., its identification with Almon-diblathaim (Num. xxxiii. 46) is dubious. The name suggests that it was rich in figs. Beth-meon is the same as Baal-meon (Num. xxxii. 38, Ezek. xxv. 9), and Beth-baal-meon (Joshua xiii. 17 and the Moabite Stone). It is the modern Ma'in, sixteen and a half miles north of Arnon, nine east of the Dead Sea, nine south-west of Heshbon. Kerioth (Amos ii. 2) is identified by some with Ar Moab, by others with Kir of Moab, but these identifications are very uncertain. Bozrah is obviously not the Edomite city (xlix. 13, Isa. lxiii. 1), but should be identified with Bezer (Deut. iv. 43; Joshua xx. 8, xxi. 36). It is perhaps to be identified with Kusr el Besheir, which lies about two miles south-west of Dibon and two north of Aroer. Jahzah is the scene of the defeat of Sihon (Num. xxi. 23, 24). It is also called Jahaz. Eusebius locates it between Medeba and Dibon. Mephaath is elsewhere associated with Jahaz (Joshua xiii. 18, xxi. 37; 1 Chron. vi. 79): presumably they were near together. See above on the plain (8), Dibon (18), Nebo (1),

21 And judgement is come upon [a] the plain country; upon
22 Holon, and upon Jahzah, and upon Mephaath; and upon
23 Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim; and
upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-
24 meon; and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon
25 all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near. [J] The
horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the
26 LORD. [S] Make ye him drunken; for he magnified
himself against the LORD: and Moab shall wallow in his
27 vomit, and he also shall be in derision. For was not
Israel a derision unto thee? was he found among thieves?
for as often as thou speakest of him, thou waggest the
28 head. [J] O ye inhabitants of Moab, leave the cities, and
dwell in the rock; and be like the dove that maketh her

[a] See ver 8.

Kiriathaim (1). For the last clause of 24 cf. xxv. 26, also at the close of a catalogue.

25. This verse connects well with 20^{a}. The 'horn' (Ps. lxxv. 10) and 'arm' are metaphors for might.

26, 27. With these verses the metre is again abandoned. The figure of drunkenness comes from xxv. 15–29, and the sickening realism of 26^{b} in the Hebrew text is suggested by xxv. 27, which seems to be an editorial insertion (see note on xxv. 27–29). We should probably regard these verses as a later interpolation. As in Isa. xxv. 10, 11, Moab is depicted in a situation at once disgusting and ridiculous. The LXX, however, reads 'And Moab has clapped his hands.' This gives an excellent sense: Moab has clapped his hands in derision of Israel, he shall himself become an object of derision. The Hebrew verb rendered 'wallow' (for which 'splash' would be better) does not bear this meaning elsewhere, and this supports the LXX. We should have to assume that the Hebrew text had been corrupted under the influence of xxv. 27, and it is not quite easy to believe this. For the second clause of 26 cf. 42.

found among thieves? Was Israel discovered in the company of thieves, caught stealing, that Moab mocked at him? Cf. ii. 14, 26. Wagging the head was a gesture of derision: cf. Ps. lxiv. 8, Mark xv. 29.

28. The metre is here resumed, and the verse connects well

nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. [S] [a] We have 29
heard of the pride of Moab, *that* he is very proud; his
loftiness, and his pride, and his arrogancy, and the
haughtiness of his heart. I know his wrath, saith the 30
LORD, that it is nought; his boastings have wrought
nothing. [b] Therefore will I howl for Moab; yea, I will 31
cry out for all Moab: for the men of Kir-heres shall they
mourn. With more than the weeping of Jazer will I weep 32

[a] See Isa. xvi. 6.

[b] See Isa. xv. 5, xvi. 7, 11.

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with 25. It is a fine verse, admirably suited to the situation, since the country offers many refuges to fugitives in the rocks, and countless doves build their nests in them. The closing words of the verse, however, are very strange. Giesebrecht suggests 'in the holes of the rocks of the precipices;' Rothstein (in Kittel) 'in the clefts' simply. Cornill gives the passage up.

29–33. This section is almost entirely derived from Isa. xv, xvi, and is not an improvement on the original. Some Jeremianic elements are perhaps embedded in it, but the passage as a whole is late.

29, 30. A very diffuse expansion of Isa. xvi. 6. For the pride of Moab cf. Isa. xxv. 11, Zeph. ii. 8–10, and perhaps the Moabite Stone; but, as Cheyne only too truly says, 'all national monuments of this sort have a tendency to exaggeration' (*Pulpit Commentary*, ad loc.). Render 30, '*I* know, saith Yahweh, his wrath; and his boastings are untruth; they do untruth' (Driver).

31. Derived from Isa. xvi. 7, but with alterations. The earlier passage gives a logical connexion; Moab's pride will lead to Moab's wailing over his misfortune. Here by the substitution of the first person, obviously under the influence of Isa. xvi. 9, the prophet's grief over Moab's fate is strangely represented as due to Moab's pride. 'The men of Kir-heres' is probably a textual error for 'the raisin-cakes of Kir-heres' rather than a deliberate alteration. On the raisin-cakes see Whitehouse's notes on Isa. xvi. 7; they were made of pressed grapes and fine meal; and had a place in religious festivities (cf. Hos. iii. 1). Kir-heres (in Isa. xvi. 7 Kir-hareseth) is probably identical with Kir of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), the modern Kerak, eight miles east of the Dead Sea, and about seventeen miles south of the Arnon. It was a very strong fortress, near the south frontier of Moab.

32. From Isa. xvi. 8, 9, but with change of order, and textual variations. At the beginning of the verse we should probably read simply 'With the weeping' (so Isa. xvi. 9) or 'As with the weep-

for thee, [a] O vine of Sibmah: thy branches passed over
the sea, they reached even to the sea of Jazer: upon thy
summer fruits and upon thy vintage the spoiler is fallen.
33 [**J**] [b] And gladness and joy is taken away, from the fruitful
field and from the land of Moab; [**S**] and I have caused
wine to cease from the winepresses: none shall tread with
34 shouting; the shouting shall be no shouting. [c] From the

[a] See Isa. xvi. 8, 9. [b] See Isa. xvi. 10. [c] See Isa. xv. 4, &c.

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ing' (so LXX). Jazer is commonly identified with Sar, ten miles north of Heshbon and seven west of Rabbath Ammon. Sibmah is two and a half miles west-north-west of Heshbon. Its vines must have been famed for their choice quality and fruitfulness. The poet expresses this under the metaphor of a gigantic vine which sent out its branches south-west over or to the Dead Sea and north to Jazer (read 'even to Jazer;' 'the sea of' is a mistaken insertion from the previous clause, there is no lake at Jazer). Isaiah gives an eastern direction also, 'they wandered into the wilderness.' For 'the spoiler' read 'the *battle* shout' as in Isa. xvi. 9 (see note on next verse).

33. From Isa. xvi. 10, but mutilated in the latter part. Cornill thinks that the words 'And gladness and joy is taken away from the land of Moab' belong to the original poem of Jeremiah; he quotes as parallels vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxv. 10. For 'none shall tread with shouting' we should read, with Isa. xvi. 10, 'no treader shall tread.' The Hebrew is very harsh, and 'shouting' is due to the following clause. The word rendered 'shouting' might be used for the vintage shout, or the battle shout. The writer means that there will be a shouting in the vineyards, but it will not be the vintage shout as the grapes are trodden in the winepress, but the shout of the soldiery as they trample the vineyards down.

34. From Isa. xv. 4-6, much abbreviated. The opening of the verse gives no sense. Giesebrecht with a slight alteration reads, 'How criest thou, Heshbon and Elealeh;' Duhm, 'Crying are Heshbon and Elealeh.' For Heshbon see 2, for Jahaz see 21, for Zoar and Horonaim see 3. Elealeh was two miles north-west of Heshbon. Eglath-shelishiyah seems to mean the third Eglath; the name would distinguish it from two other Eglaths in the neighbourhood (cf. the three Strettons which are close together, Little Stretton, Church Stretton, and All Stretton). Its site is unknown, presumably it was near Horonaim. Duhm supplies the want of a verb by correcting 'from Zoar even unto,' and reading 'Horonaim and Eglath-Shelishiyah call out.' The 'waters of Nimrim' are not identified with certainty. They were probably in the south of Moab,

cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, even unto Jahaz have
they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim,
[a] to Eglath-shelishiyah: for the waters of Nimrim also
shall become [b] desolate. [J] Moreover I will cause to 35
cease in Moab, saith the LORD, him that offereth in the
high place, and him that burneth incense to his gods.
[S] Therefore mine heart soundeth for Moab like pipes, 36
and mine heart soundeth like pipes for the men of Kir-heres:
therefore the abundance that he hath gotten is
perished. For every head is bald, and every beard 37
clipped: upon all the hands are cuttings, and upon the
loins sackcloth. On all the housetops of Moab and in 38
the streets thereof there is lamentation every where:

[a] Or, as *an heifer of three years old*

[b] Heb. *desolations.*

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perhaps the Wady Numeirah which runs into the Dead Sea near its southern extremity. The desolation is due to the stopping of the sources, as we read in 2 Kings iii. 25 with reference to the campaign of Israel, Judah, and Edom against Moab, 'they stopped all the wells of water.'

35. This verse has points of contact with Isa. xv. 2, xvi. 12, but seems not to be based upon them, and Cornill considers it, apart from 'saith the LORD,' to be a part of Jeremiah's prophecy. The Hebrew does not bear the rendering 'him that offereth in;' probably this is the sense intended: a slight change yields this sense.

36. From Isa. xvi. 11, xv. 7ᵃ. The sympathetic tone is noteworthy, though for the first 'mine heart' the LXX reads 'the harp of Moab.' 'Pipes' is substituted for 'harp;' they were used at funerals (Matt. ix. 23). The verb is less suitable here. The latter part of the verse is difficult, since 'therefore' is inappropriate: the A.V. renders 'because,' but this is rather questionable.

37. For 'baldness' and 'gashes' as signs of mourning see xvi. 6, xlvii. 5. The passage is based on Isa. xv. 2, 3. We learn only from it that cuttings were made in the hands. For 'the lions' we should read 'all lions,' with LXX and Vulgate.

38. The former part of the verse is derived from Isa. xv. 3. The latter part, however, is independent of the oracle in Isaiah, and is regarded by Cornill as part of Jeremiah's prophecy, since it is with slight excision metrically correct, and the metaphor is genuinely Jeremianic (xxii. 28: see note). It is dubious whether this latter feature favours the authenticity.

[JS] for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no
39 pleasure, saith the LORD. How is it broken down! [a] *how*
do they howl! how hath Moab turned the back with
shame! so shall Moab become a derision and a dismaying
40 to all that are round about him. [S] For thus saith the
LORD: Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread
41 out his wings against Moab. [b] Kerioth is taken, and the
strong holds are surprised, and the heart of the mighty
men of Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman
42 in her pangs. And Moab shall be destroyed from being
a people, because he hath magnified himself against the
43 LORD. [c] Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee,
44 O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD. He that fleeth
from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth
up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: [J] for
I will bring upon her, even upon Moab, the year of their
45 visitation, saith the LORD. [S] [d] They that fled stand

[a] Or, *howl ye!* [b] †Or, *The cities are taken* [c] See Isa. xxiv. 17, 18.
[d] Or, *Fleeing because of the force they stand under*

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39. Here again Cornill claims for Jeremiah the latter part of the verse.

40, 41. For these verses the LXX gives simply 'For thus saith the LORD: Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised.' The rest of the verses has been inserted from xlix. 22, with the necessary alteration of the proper names. Probably we should render 'the cities' instead of 'Kerioth,' on account of the parallelism; if the word is a proper noun cf. 24. The eagle symbolizes the conqueror.

42. Cf. 2, 26.

43, 44^{a} occur also in Isa. xxiv. 17, 18^{a} with slight differences, and a general reference to the earth rather than the specific reference to Moab. Our passage is probably the later. Cf. Lam. iii. 47, Amos v. 18 20. The Hebrew for 'Fear, and the pit, and the snare' is *paḥad wāpaḥath wāpāḥ*; the assonances cannot be reproduced in English. For 44^{b} cf. xi. 23^{b}, xxiii. 12. Cornill assigns it to the original poems.

45–47 are absent in the LXX, which proceeds from 44 to the vision of the wine-cup, i.e. to xxv. 15 in the Hebrew. Verses 45, 46 are taken, except the beginning of 45, from Num. xxi. 28, 29, without strength under the shadow of Heshbon: [a] for a fire is gone forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and hath devoured the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones. Woe 46 unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh is undone: for thy sons are taken away captive, and thy daughters into captivity. Yet will I [b] bring again the captivity of 47 Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgement of Moab.

[J] Of the children of Ammon. Thus saith the LORD: **49**

[a] Or, *but* See Num. xxi. 28, 29. [b] Or, *return to*

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xxiv. 17. The opening words of 45 are far from clear. That the fugitives should shelter under the walls of Heshbon is strange, since they would rather be fleeing south. That Heshbon belonged to Ammon is not probable, in spite of xlix. 3 (see note); so that the fugitives are not represented as taking refuge at a foreign city. Instead of 'the midst of Sihon' we should read, with trivial alteration, 'from the house of Sihon;' Num. xxi. 28 reads 'city of Sihon,' i.e. Heshbon. Sihon took it from the Moabites, the Hebrews took it from him, now the Moabites had recovered it. The text in the latter part of 45 is better than in Num. xxiv. 17.

47. Cornill regards the promise of ultimate restoration as Jeremianic. The closing words are an editorial note indicating the close of the oracle. Rothstein thinks the writer means that at the time of writing the judgement of Moab still continued: the restoration belonged to the future.

xlix. 1–6. ORACLE ON AMMON.

An oracle on Ammon is quite to be expected among Jeremiah's prophecies on the nations, since like Moab and Edom it was akin to Israel and lived on its borders. The authenticity of the present prophecy is, however, decidedly rejected not only by those who believe all the oracles on the nations to be late, but by Giesebrecht. He urges that the people which is to invade Ammon remains quite obscure; the idea that Israel will take Ammon's land while it is in exile contradicts the representation in xxv that Israel is in banishment at the same time; and that Gilead should again fall to Ammon seems a strange withdrawal of the previous threats and promises. But as to the first of these, Giesebrecht admits a genuine element in the following oracle on Edom, though the foe remains just as obscure. The second objection is very weighty,

Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth
[a] Malcam [b] possess Gad, and his people dwell in the cities
2 thereof? Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the
Lord, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard
against Rabbah of the children of Ammon; and it shall
become a desolate [c] heap, and her daughters shall be
burned with fire: [S] then shall Israel [b] possess them that
3 did [b] possess him, saith the Lord. [J] Howl, O Heshbon,

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[a] Or, *their king* [b] Or, *inherit* [c] See ch. xxx. 18.

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but may be satisfied by the surrender of that element in the oracle, and the same answer may be made to the third.

After the deportation of Gad with others of the northern tribes in 734 B.C., the Ammonites who dwelt on the east of Gad's territory probably availed themselves of the opportunity to annex the fertile land. Amos i. 13–15 should be compared.

xlix. 1–6. Has Israel no sons, that Milcom's people dwell in Gad's cities? Behold, Rabbah shall be made desolate and her daughter cities; then Israel will enter again on possession. Let the Ammonites lament, Milcom shall go into captivity. Why glory in thy valley, rebel daughter, expecting no foe? Panic shall seize thee, and every one be driven out. But afterward Ammon shall be restored.

xlix. 1. The oracle opens with a question quite in Jeremiah's manner (cf. ii. 14 and often), Is it because Israel has no children to possess it, that Ammon has appropriated the territory of Gad? No, even if Gad were extirpated, there were other tribes of Israel to claim the rights of next-of-kin. Malcam should probably here and in 3 be pointed Milcom (so LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate), who was god of the Ammonites, as Chemosh of the Moabites.

2. Rabbah was the chief city of Ammon; it lay about thirteen miles north-east of Heshbon. 'Her daughters' are, of course, the smaller cities.

then shall Israel . . . the LORD. This clause recalls Zeph. ii. 9; but, apart from the vindictiveness of it (cf. Isa. xiv. 2), it raises the difficulty touched on already, that since Israel was to go into exile at the same time as Ammon, it would not be in a position to resume possession of its former territory. The clause should probably be omitted, as by Cornill.

3. This verse is difficult. Even if the existence of an otherwise unknown Ammonite city Ai were granted, the mention of Heshbon would be strange, since this was a Moabite city, though close on the border of Ammon. Graf supposed that Ai should be

for Ai is spoiled; cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, gird you
with sackcloth: lament, and run to and fro among the
fences; for [a] Malcam shall go into captivity, his priests
and his princes together. [b] Wherefore gloriest thou in 4
the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter?
that trusted in her treasures, *saying*, Who shall come unto
me? Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the 5

[a] Or, *their king* [b] Or, *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys? thy valley floweth away*

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emended into Ar (city), thinking that as the capital of Moab was called Ar-Moab, that of Ammon might be called Ar or Ar-Ammon. It would be simpler, with Cornill, to read 'the city' (*hā'īr*). For 'Heshbon' he proposes 'children of Ammon,' but this is not easy; Duhm accepts the former emendation, but for 'Heshbon' reads 'palace' (*'armōn*), also not quite easy. Rothstein does not challenge 'Heshbon,' but eliminates Ai by reading 'for thou art spoiled.' Cornill thinks a line is missing after 'Rabbah,' and suggests, in accordance with l. 12, 'for your mother is put to shame.' The close of the verse is taken from Amos i. 15.

fences. The word properly means 'walls;' it is used with reference to sheep-folds, and the explanation is given that they should run to and fro in the open country, among the sheep-folds, because the cities could no longer afford them a shelter. But the text can hardly be right, the idea is most unnaturally expressed. What we need in this description is some expression of mourning. Giesebrecht proposed an emendation for the whole clause which may be rendered 'and having cut yourselves, wallow (in dust).' Duhm suggested a similar correction, but it would be simpler to read, with Cornill, 'run to and fro in mourning attire.'

4. This verse also is difficult. The Hebrew rendered 'thy flowing valley' is strange; we have probably to do with a case of dittography, and should read simply 'Wherefore gloriest thou in thy valley?' i. e. the valley in which Rabbah was situated, a very well-watered and fertile valley. The epithet 'backsliding' is also surprising as applied to a heathen people; Duhm's emendation, 'careless,' 'arrogant' (cf. Isa. xlvii. 7–10), gives an excellent sense. She trusts in her abundant supplies and inaccessibility to attack.

5. On this people, thus incredulous of calamity, shall fall a panic, inspired by an onslaught of her neighbours, and each shall seek his own safety in a flight which recks nothing of the safety of others, and which will not be retrieved. 'Every man right forth' is literally 'every man before him.'

Lord, the Lord of hosts, from all that are round about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth, and there shall be none to gather up him that wandereth.
6 [S] But afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord.

7 [J] Of Edom. Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Is

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6. This verse is wanting in the LXX, and is probably a later addition.

xlix. 7–22. Oracle on Edom.

Of this oracle, equally with those on Moab and Ammon, we might say that it has in its favour the fact that Edom was so closely akin to Israel in blood and stood in such intimate relations to it in history that the absence of any oracle upon it would be surprising. The length of this section suggests that, as in the case of Moab, a Jeremianic original may have been expanded; and this is made still more probable by the close parallel with the Book of Obadiah. xlix. 9, 10^a corresponds to Obad. 5, 6; xlix. 14–16 to Obad. 1–4; and there are slighter points of contact. The critical problem thus presented is very complicated, largely on account of the uncertainties in which the criticism of Obadiah is involved. Since in its present form this book is clearly later than the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C., when the Edomites displayed a bitter hostility towards Jacob (Obad. 10 ff.), it cannot have been used by Jeremiah in a prophecy dating from the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Inasmuch, however, as a comparison between the two texts shows that Obadiah on the whole preserves a more original form than Jeremiah, it has been very widely held that both prophets quote from an earlier oracle, which Obadiah has reproduced more faithfully: and this opinion is still held by several eminent critics, including Driver, G. A. Smith, and J. A. Selbie ('Obadiah' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*). The problem has, however, passed into a new stage, due to the development of criticism with reference to both books. So far as Obadiah is concerned, several of the foremost Old Testament scholars, including Giesebrecht, Cornill, Duhm, Nowack, and Marti, have accepted the view put forward by Wellhausen that the two prophets did not quote from an earlier prophecy, but that the original work of Obadiah consisted of Obad. 1–5, 7, 10–14, 15^b, and was wholly written some time after the destruction of Jerusalem, not to announce the approaching downfall of Edom, but to describe the ruin which had already overtaken it. This was the expulsion of the Edomites from their country by the Arabs. The prophecy was brought into wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the

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connexion with the conditions which lie behind the Book of Malachi. As criticism stands with reference to the Book of Jeremiah, no veto is imposed on Wellhausen's theory by the quotation from Obadiah in the present passage. Assuming that the version in Jeremiah is secondary, there is no difficulty in regarding it as a late insertion in a Jeremianic oracle; or if on other grounds the authenticity of our oracle be denied, in assuming that its post-exilic author made use of the quotation. If the extracts in Jeremiah are indissolubly connected with their context, this would carry with it an acceptance of the latter alternative. The question as to the criticism of Obadiah need not be further pursued here; the student may refer to the discussion devoted to it in the commentary on that Book by R. F. Horton and the literature mentioned above; an admirable statement and defence of Wellhausen's view is given by G. B. Gray in the article on 'Obadiah' in Hastings' *One Volume Dictionary of the Bible.* So far as our passage is concerned, we should probably adopt the view that a genuine Jeremianic nucleus is to be recognized, but that there has been considerable expansion. Even Giesebrecht assigns 7–11, with the exception of 9, to Jeremiah. Cornill agrees as to these verses, but thinks that 22 should be added to them, at least a quatrain having been omitted in the revision. The object of the revision was, he considers, the same here as in the case of Moab, to make the catastrophe as crushing as possible, both nations being special objects of Judah's hatred in the later period.

xlix. 7–12. Has Teman lost its wisdom? Let the Dedanites flee, for calamity comes upon Edom at Yahweh's hand; he will not be able to conceal himself; he is destroyed, and must leave his orphans and widows in the care of Yahweh.

13–22. For Bozrah and all the cities shall be laid waste; the nations are summoned to war against her, and she shall be made small; her proud security is her ruin; all that pass by it will be astonished at her fate. The land shall be as forsaken as the cities of the Plain. A lion will come and drive them from their homestead. They shall be dragged away helpless. The earth will tremble at the crash of their fall. One shall swoop upon Bozrah like a griffon, and the heart of Edom's warriors shall be in anguish.

xlix. 7. This verse has some likeness to Obad. 8, but is not taken from it. If Wellhausen's reconstruction of the original prophecy of Obadiah is correct, Obad. 8 is a later insertion; in that case it was probably introduced from this passage. Teman was strictly a district of Edom, probably in the north-east of that country, since Dedan (see xxv. 23), which lay on the south of Edom, is repre-

8 prudent? is their wisdom vanished? Flee ye, turn back,
dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the
calamity of Esau upon him, the time that I shall visit him.
9 [S] If grapegatherers came to thee, [a] would they not leave
some gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, would they not
10 destroy till they had enough? [J] But I have made Esau
bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not
be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his

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[a] †Or, *they will leave no gleaning grapes; if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. For &c.* See Obad. 5.

sented in Ezek. xxv. 13 as at the other extremity. Its chief town seems from Amos i. 12 to have been Bozrah, unless Teman is there used for Edom as a whole. Eliphaz, the friend of Job, was a Temanite; but it is questionable if this verse substantiates the current opinion that Edom was famed for its wisdom. Cornill thinks that the second part of the line which is missing after 'Teman,' if we have Qina rhythm here, may perhaps have run 'discernment in Bozrah.'

8. The Dedanites (xxv. 23) on the southern border of Edom are bidden to flee and 'dwell deep' in some impenetrable retreat, lest they be overwhelmed by the blast of judgement which is to sweep over Edom. The last clause of the verse should be 'the time of his visitation' (so LXX, Vulgate).

9. This verse is derived from Obad. 5, where the meaning is that whereas thieves would steal only till they had enough, and grapegatherers would leave grapes for the gleaners who followed them, the enemy has left nothing but made a clean sweep. The application is different here. The rendering in the margin gives the true sense; and the enemy are not contrasted with the grapegatherers and thieves, but represented under these figures. The main point is the same, that the ruthless foe spares nothing.

10. This has a parallel in Obad. 6, which probably does not belong to the original prophecy, but has been inserted in Obadiah from our passage, like Obad. 8 (see note on 7). The superiority in sense lies with our passage, since it fits the context; the Dedanites are bidden flee to their retreats (8), but Yahweh has made this impossible for Edom, his retreats are all discovered. The first person pronoun is emphatic.

his seed . . . is not. Cornill reads simply 'he is spoiled and is not;' partly on metrical grounds, partly because the reference to the 'seed' conflicts with 11. Rothstein agrees for the former reason; Giesebrecht omits simply 'and his brethren and his neigh-

brethren, and his neighbours, and he is not. Leave thy 11
fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let
thy widows trust in me. [S] For thus saith the LORD: 12
Behold, they [a] to whom it pertained not to drink of the
cup shall assuredly drink; and art thou he that shall
altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished,
but thou shalt surely drink. For I have sworn by myself, 13
saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become an astonishment,
a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof
shall be perpetual wastes. [b] I have heard tidings from 14

[a] Or, *whose judgement was not*

[b] See Obad. 1–4.

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bours.' The LXX reads the word rendered 'seed' as 'arm' (or 'hand'); on this basis Duhm reads 'he is spoiled by the arm of his brothers and neighbours.'

11. In this context a very striking verse, which forms a noble contrast to the unmeasured hate of Edom which characterizes many passages. It is easier to believe that it is Jeremiah's utterance than that of another. As Cornill truly says, it is remarkable that it was not expunged. The Divine judgement destroys the warriors of Edom, but it does not root out women and children; they are indeed made widows and orphans, but Yahweh will pity their forlorn condition and tenderly comfort and preserve them.

12. Cf. xxv. 15–28 for the cup of Yahweh's wrath. This verse rests upon xxv. 28, 29, it cannot well be Jeremiah's, for he held that the people of Yahweh were pre-eminently worthy to drink the cup. 'He would have been the last to say that Judah or Israel had been punished without deserving it' (Schwally). No doubt the fact that its punishment is spoken of as still future might be plausibly urged in favour of a date before 586 B.C. But such an anticipation as is expressed in this verse might well have been uttered from the standpoint of the later eschatology.

13. Giesebrecht prints the verse as secondary, but says that it may perhaps have formed the conclusion of the oracle. Cornill treats it as secondary, since it is written in prose.

Bozrah is commonly identified with Buṣaireh, about twenty miles south-east of the Dead Sea, thirty-five north of Petra; though R. A. S. Macalister says, 'The guesses that have been made at its identification are of no importance' (Hastings' *One Volume Bible Dictionary*).

14–16. These verses are parallel to Obad. 1–4, and derived from it. The words with which they open stand much better at the

the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the nations,
saying, Gather yourselves together, and come against her,
15 and rise up to the battle. For, behold, I have made
thee small among the nations, and despised among men.
16 As for thy terribleness, the pride of thine heart hath

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beginning of a prophecy as in Obadiah, than in the middle as here. The prophet (for 'I' Obadiah reads 'We,' i.e. prophet and people) has received a Divine communication; a messenger is sent to stir the nations against Edom (cf. Isa. xiii. 2-4).

15. The consequent humiliation of Edom.

16. The opening of the verse is very difficult, perhaps incurably corrupt. The word rendered, 'As for thy terribleness' is absent from Obadiah, and occurs nowhere else. If this rendering is correct, the meaning may be that although the formidable character of Edom, due to her almost impregnable position, had indeed led her to deem herself beyond peril, Yahweh by bringing her down would convince her that her pride had played her false. More probably it is an exclamation meaning either 'Oh thy shuddering!' i.e. when the unexpected calamity overtakes thee, or 'Oh the shuddering for thee!' i.e. for the shuddering thy fate inspires in the spectators Duhm has made a remarkably ingenious suggestion He points the last word of 15 so as to yield the sense 'through Edom thy Horror;' Edom being interpreted as the name of a god. We have no proof that Edom was the name of a god, though several scholars believe that it was, and Obed-edom might be quoted in corroboration (see S. A. Cook's note in *Enc. Bib.* 3462). Duhm takes the word to be a gloss, since it is absent in Obadiah. In his translation, however, he renders 'and despised of men thy image of horror.'

The description of Edom's almost inaccessible position is very true to the facts. 'Its capital, Petra, lay in an amphitheatre of mountains, accessible only through the narrow gorge, called the *Sik*, winding in with precipitous sides from the west; and the mountain sides round Petra, and the ravines about it, contain innumerable rock-hewn cavities, some being tombs, but others dwellings, in which the ancient inhabitants lived' (Driver). 'The interior is reached by defiles, so narrow that two horsemen may scarcely ride abreast, and the sun is shut out by the overhanging rocks. . . . Little else than wild-fowls' nests are the villages; human eyries perched on high shelves or hidden away in caves at the ends of the deep gorges' (G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, ii. p. 179). As the last writer further points out, it was 'a well-stocked, well-watered country, full of food and lusty men, deceived thee, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of [a] the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD. And Edom 17 shall become an astonishment: every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah 18 and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein. Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the 19 [b] pride of Jordan [c] against the strong habitation: [d] but I will suddenly make him run away from her; and whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her: for who is like me? and who will appoint me a time? and who is the

[a] Or, *Sela* See 2 Kings xiv. 7. [b] Or, *swelling* [c] †Or, *unto the permanent pastures* [d] †Or, *for I will suddenly drive them away*

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yet lifted so high, and locked so fast by precipice and slippery mountains, that it calls for little trouble of defence.'

the rock. This is probably the correct rendering, but there is an allusion to Sela, i.e. perhaps Petra, which lay fifty miles south of the Dead Sea, in the situation described in the preceding note. It was the capital of the Nabataeans.

17. Almost identical with xix. 8; cf. xviii. 16.

18. The **neighbour cities** are Admah and Zeboim, Deut. xxix. 23: cf. Hos. xi. 8. The verse is repeated in l. 40. Notice 'son of man,' used as the equivalent of 'man.'

19-21. Repeated in l. 44-46, with adaptations to Babylon.

19. The foe comes up against Edom as a lion comes from the jungle to the pastures in search of prey. The word rendered 'strong' is rather 'permanent.' We may render 'permanent homestead,' explaining 'an abode of long standing and likely to endure.' The adjective is not very suitable; Duhm suggests 'pasture of rams;' Cornill improves this excellent suggestion, reading 'pasture of sheep.' He continues 'so will I suddenly drive them away, and their choice rams will I visit.' No shepherd will be able to withstand the foe, for Yahweh urges it on.

appoint me a time? i. e. for a contest: cf. Job ix. 19. No power is strong enough to challenge Yahweh.

20 shepherd that will stand before me? Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely [a] they shall drag them away, *even* the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make
21 their [b] habitation [c] desolate with them. The earth trembleth at the noise of their fall; there is a cry, the noise
22 whereof is heard in the Red Sea. [J] Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread out his wings against Bozrah: and the heart of the mighty men of Edom at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs.

23 Of Damascus. Hamath is ashamed, and Arpad; for

[a] Or, *the little ones of the flock shall drag them away*
[b] Or, *pastures* [c] Or, *astonished at them*

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20. When the lion pounces on the flock, a lion so fierce and powerful that no shepherd can withstand him, the helpless sheep are dragged off to be devoured. Duhm and Cornill render 'the shepherd lads' instead of 'the little ones of the flock.'

22. Cornill thinks that this verse, with its simile of the eagle so appropriate to the foe which strikes at Edom in its mountain fastnesses, formed the conclusion of the original prophecy, and that one quatrain at least must have been struck out between 11 and 22. This verse has been employed in xlviii. 40, 41.

xlix. 23–27. ORACLE ON DAMASCUS.

The authenticity of this oracle is rejected by Cornill and Köberle, not to mention other scholars. Certainly there are difficulties in accepting it. Too much importance must not be attached to the fact that the title does not quite harmonize with the contents; which are concerned also with Hamath and Arpad (cf. Isa. xvii. 1–11). The charge that the situation is very indefinitely described applies to other oracles, the genuineness of which we have accepted; and granting that it dates from 605 B. C., there was no need to describe conditions familiar to all. More serious is the absence of any reference to these cities in the vision of judgement (xxv. 18 ff.) If Jeremiah at this time composed an oracle on them, it is not easy to understand why they are not included in the list of those who drank the cup. If this objection is not fatal, there

they have heard evil tidings, they are melted away: there
is [a] sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet. Damascus is 24
waxed feeble, she turneth herself to flee, and trembling
hath seized on her: anguish and sorrows have taken hold
of her, as of a woman in travail. How is the city of 25

[a] Or, *care*

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is no decisive reason against recognizing a genuine nucleus (so Rothstein). The last verse is imitated from the refrain in Amos i. 3—ii. 5, and corresponds closely to Amos i. 4 (see on xvii. 27). We find 26 also in l. 30; it may be original here, but 'Therefore' is more appropriate there. These two verses are accordingly not unlikely to be an addition. No serious difficulty lies against 24, 25, except that the language of 24 is rather conventional and contains an Aramaism. Verse 23 is not quite so easy to accept in its present form, but it is generally recognized that the text is corrupt. On the whole the present writer inclines to regard 23–25 as by Jeremiah.

xlix. 23–27. Hamath and Arpad are dismayed; Damascus in terror turns to escape. The city is forsaken. Therefore her warriors shall be overthrown; and a fire from Yahweh shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

xlix. 23. Hamath, now called Hama, still an important town, was a famous city of Syria, situated on the Orontes, 110 miles north of Damascus. **Arpad,** now Tell-Erfad, which is often mentioned with it (Isa. x. 9, xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13), lay 95 miles further north, and 10 miles north of Aleppo. The prophet describes the terror and paralysis due to the tidings they have heard, i. e. of Nebuchadnezzar's advance.

there is . . . quiet. This clause is unintelligible in its present form; there is no sea at Damascus. Several scholars read 'like the sea;' Cornill objects that the raging sea is very unsuitable to describe a people in terror, and with a slight emendation reads 'they are melted away there from care.' The present text may have arisen through the influence of Isa. lvii. 20.

24. Damascus was a very ancient city; for long the chief city in Syria.

trembling: the word is Aramaic.

25. The text can hardly be correct; we expect 'How is the city of praise forsaken.' The omission of the negative gives the right sense, but it is not easy to understand its insertion. Cornill reads 'Woe is me, for the city of praise is forsaken.' The closing words show that a Damascene is speaking, unless with several Versions we read 'the city of joy.' In that case Duhm's 'Woe to her' would need to be substituted for Cornill's 'Woe is me.'

26 praise not forsaken, the city of my joy? [S] Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be brought to silence in that day, saith the
27 LORD of hosts. And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

28 [J] Of Kedar, and of the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote.

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26. Therefore is here quite unsuitable; if l. 30 is borrowed from our passage, the latter may have been influenced in turn by it, or the original text may have been 'Surely.'

27. Cf. Amos i. 4. Several kings of Damascus bore the name Ben-hadad.

xlix. 28–33. ORACLE ON ARAB TRIBES.

Like the preceding oracle, this also is rejected by Giesebrecht, Cornill, and Köberle. On the other hand Winckler, though with rather drastic textual criticism, Erbt, and Rothstein have accepted its authenticity, at least in part. Such an oracle we are led to expect by the reference to Arab tribes in xxv. 23. It is not quite clear why such an oracle should have been composed in the post-exilic period. It is true that the Arabs are represented as then hostile to Judah, and the spread of the Nabataeans might have occasioned a prophecy against them. But the fact that Nebuchadnezzar is expressly mentioned as the enemy leaves us with the pre-exilic date, or a deliberate ante-dating of the oracle, as our only alternatives. It is probable that here, as elsewhere, a prophecy by Jeremiah has been expanded by a later writer. The influence of Ezekiel is fairly clear in 30, 31.

xlix. 28–33. Yahweh gives the order to spoil Kedar of tents and flocks, of hangings and camels. Let the inhabitants of Hazor find a remote retreat, for Nebuchadnezzar has designs against them. Let them take refuge with a people secure from invasion. Their camels and cattle shall be the victor's spoil; they themselves shall be scattered to all the winds; and their land shall be a perpetual desolation.

xlix. 28. Kedar (see ii. 10) was the name of a prosperous Arab tribe living in village communities in the wilderness, often mentioned in the Old Testament and the cuneiform inscriptions. Hazor is elsewhere used for towns in Palestine; here it may be an Arabian town, otherwise unknown to us; or it may be the name of a district where the Arabs had settled down and dwelt in villages.

Thus saith the LORD: Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and
spoil the children of the east. Their tents and their flocks 29
shall they take; they shall carry away for themselves their
curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels: and they
shall cry unto them, Terror on every side. Flee ye, 30
wander far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor,
saith the LORD; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon
hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived
a purpose against you. [S] Arise, get you up unto a nation 31
that is at ease, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD;
which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone.
And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of 32
their cattle a spoil: and I will scatter unto all winds them
that have the corners *of their hair* polled; and I will
bring their calamity from every side of them, saith the

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the name being derived from the Hebrew term for village (cf. Isa. xlii. 11). 'Kingdom' is strange; the LXX gives 'queen,' which Winckler, Schmidt, and Erbt accept. We read elsewhere of queens in this region. 'The children of the east' are the Arabian tribes on the east of Palestine.

29. It is the nomads rather than the settled tribes that are here in mind. The curtains are the tent hangings, as in iv. 20.

Terror on every side: a Jeremianic expression, which, of course, might be due to a conscious attempt to simulate the prophet's style.

30. The writer is either Jeremiah or means to be taken for him, since the circumstances presupposed are those of Jeremiah's time. The exhortation 'dwell deep' is less suitable to Bedawin than to the Edomites to whom it is addressed in 8. It has not improbably been mistakenly introduced here from that verse.

31, 32. These verses have features in common with Ezekiel which point to their composition or at least interpolation under his influence. The description of the attack by Gog and his hordes on the defenceless Israelites, 'that are at quiet, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates' (Ezek. xxxviii. 11), is before the writer's mind, and there are other points of contact between the passages. Cf. also Judg. xviii. 7, 10, 27, 28. The exhortation is addressed to the enemy.

32. them . . . polled: cf. ix. 26, xxv. 23.

33 Lord. And Hazor shall be a dwelling place of jackals, a desolation for ever: no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.

34 [J] The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning Elam in the beginning of the reign of

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33. Cf. ix. 11, x. 22 for the former part of the verse; xlix. 18 for the latter.

xlix. 34–39. Oracle on Elam.

Elam was a country lying to the east of South Babylonia and the Lower Tigris, later known as Susiana, and roughly identical with the country now called Chuzistan. That Jeremiah should devote an oracle to a country so distant and remote from Jewish interests has seemed to many scholars improbable; and even Rothstein rejects its authenticity. Köberle, however, who judges the prophecies on the nations less favourably than Rothstein, accepts it; and Cornill accepts a genuine nucleus, which was, he believes, expanded when the Elamites were identified with the Persians. Giesebrecht and Schmidt think the whole was written under the Persian rule; the latter supposes that it was written at the approach of Alexander, the hatred of Persia which it breathes being occasioned by the sufferings of the Jews at the hands of Ochus. But if the oracle is entirely spurious, it is very strange that a special date should be assigned to it, since we should have expected it to be dated with the others in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. And the altered conditions at this date are favourable to the authenticity. Elam was distant from Judaea, but it was near to Babylon. And with Jehoiachin a large number of Jews had gone to Babylon, and they kept up a close and constant correspondence with Judaea. For them the fate of Elam would have an interest it could not have possessed before the deportation. At a later time Ezekiel refers to the overthrow of Elam, here it is anticipated. It has been argued that the overthrow was actually effected by the Persian king Teispes, the great-grandfather of Cyrus. Cornill thinks that Jeremiah's interest may have been due to a presentiment that the power which had laid Elam low might be the destined conqueror of Babylon, as indeed proved to be the case.

xlix. 34–39. Jeremiah's prophecy on Elam at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign. Elam's bow shall be broken, and the Elamites shall be scattered to the four winds among all nations. Elam shall be dismayed before its enemies, and the sword shall consume them. Yet it shall be restored in the latter days.

Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD 35
of hosts: Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief
of their might. [S] And upon Elam will I bring the four 36
winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter
them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation
whither [a] the outcasts of Elam shall not come. [J] And 37
I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies,
and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil
upon them, even my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and
I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed
them: and I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy 38
from thence king and princes, saith the LORD. But it 39
shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring
again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

[S] The word that the LORD spake concerning Babylon, 50

[a] Another reading is, *the everlasting outcasts.*

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xlix. 35. The Elamites were famous archers: cf. Isa. xxii. 6. A similar expression, however, is used with reference to Israel in Hos. i. 5.

36. Cornill regards this as a later insertion. The expression to 'scatter them toward all those winds' is characteristic of Ezekiel (Ezek. v. 10, 12, xii. 14), and the opening of the verse recalls Ezek. xxxvii. 9, and if there is dependence, Ezekiel is obviously the original. The latter point can hardly be pressed. It is, however, strange to read 37 after 36. After the prophecy that Elam will be scattered by the four winds to every nation under heaven, we do not expect to read that it will be dismayed before its enemies. Verse 37 fits well to 35, and the progress of thought is interrupted by 36.

38. Yahweh sets His throne in Elam in order to judge it.

l. 1—li. 58. ORACLE ON BABYLON.

That in a series of oracles on the nations Jeremiah should include a prophecy of Babylon's overthrow ought to occasion no surprise. Although he saw in Babylon the agent of Yahweh's judgement on Judah and other nations, he predicted that its empire would fall in seventy years. Moreover, that such an oracle was composed by him is attested by the narrative in li. 59–64, if concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet.

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its historicity can be accepted. Nevertheless it is an almost universally accepted result of criticism that l. 1—li. 58 cannot be the work of Jeremiah. This view was put forward by Eichhorn, and in spite of opposition from several scholars, notably Graf, it has been more and more adopted, Orelli constituting the chief exception at the present day. To this result Kuenen and especially Budde have been the foremost contributors. According to li. 59–64, the oracle belongs to the fourth year of Zedekiah. It does not belong to the oracles on the foreign nations published in the reign of Jehoiakim, so that its authenticity is not supported by these. It is distinguished from these also by its immense length. It contains 103 verses: that on Moab, which approaches it most nearly, contains forty-seven verses. It is noteworthy for its frequent repetitions. Budde reckons that the approach of desolation is mentioned eleven times; the capture and destruction of Babylon nine times; Israel's flight and return to Palestine seven times; and other themes are similarly the subject of repeated reference. Such a feature is quite unexampled in Jeremiah's prophecies. Looking at it still from the literary standpoint the relationship with other writings is very close. The fact that characteristic expressions of the Book of Jeremiah are present in large proportions might be urged in favour of its authenticity; but what was possible to Graf with his acceptance of almost the whole of the book as Jeremiah's, is no longer possible to those who recognize that not a little is secondary, and that our chapters have affinity with these as well as with the genuine passages. Moreover it betrays the same relationship to other and later writings from Ezekiel onwards, in particular to the later sections of the Book of Isaiah. The situation reflected in the oracle is not that of Zedekiah's fourth year. Israel and Judah are in exile (l. 4, 5, 8, 19, 28, 33, li. 34, 45); the Temple has been violated by the Babylonians (l. 28, li. 11, 51). It is true that the captivity of Israel had happened long before, and that a large body of Jews had been deported with Jehoiachin, together with Temple vessels. But the language suggests that a much more drastic fate had fallen on city and people. It can hardly be satisfied by anything short of the catastrophe of 586. And since the writer anticipates that the overthrow of Babylon is near at hand, he cannot be identified with Jeremiah who expected its empire to last for seventy years. Nor is the attitude to practical issues the same. Jeremiah, in prospect of the long captivity, calms the excitement of the exiles and bids them acquiesce in their lot and pray for the peace of Babylon; the author of this prophecy anticipates its speedy downfall, and

Declare ye among the nations and publish, and set 2
up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon
is taken, Bel is put to shame, Merodach is [a] dismayed;

[a] Or, *broken down*

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excites the Jews with predictions of their approaching deliverance. And while the prophet believed that Babylon's time also would come, he betrays no exultation such as is so strongly expressed in this prophecy, nor any bitter, vindictive feelings for the wrongs inflicted on Judah. He looked on the Chaldeans as Yahweh's agents of chastisement for His people; our author sees in their overthrow Yahweh's vengeance for the judgement they have executed.

Since we have reason to suppose that Jeremiah wrote an oracle announcing the fate of Babylon, it is not impossible that it has been preserved in our prophecy. The earlier attempts by Movers and Hitzig to extract a genuine nucleus have met with no acceptance. But, with the example of the other oracles, it is by no means arbitrary to suppose that our prophecy may have grown up about a genuine kernel, as Rothstein believes. This cannot, however, be pointed out with any confidence; and, even if it exists, can form only a very small proportion of the whole.

The most obvious suggestion as to the date is that it belongs to the period immediately preceding the capture of Babylon by Cyrus in 538, that of Isa. xiii. 1—xiv. 23, and Isa. xl–lv. But its affinity with these and later writings makes such a date improbable, since it seems generally to be secondary rather than original. It would be a mistake to regard it as a purely literary production concerned with a dead issue. Babylon was not destroyed by Cyrus, but remained for several generations, its continued existence a perplexity to those who read the earlier prophecies of its utter ruin. To such perplexity our oracle seeks to give an answer.

In view of the numerous repetitions and the absence of any ordered development of the theme, it would be unprofitable to prefix the usual analysis to the annotations.

1. 2. It is remarkable how much repetition there is in this verse; 'publish,' 'put to shame,' 'dismayed,' are each repeated. But we should perhaps omit, with the LXX, 'and set up a standard; publish;' the setting up of the standard is not suitable here, and seems to be a gloss borrowed from Isa. xiii. 2, this chapter having several points of contact with our oracle.

Bel: properly an appellative, meaning 'lord,' but used also as a proper name. Bel came to be identified with **Merodach,** i.e. Marduk the chief god of Babylon. Here they seem to be distin-

her images are put to shame, her idols are [a] dismayed.
3 For out of the north there cometh up a nation against
her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall
dwell therein: they are fled, they are gone, both man and
4 beast. In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD,
the children of Israel shall come, they and the children
of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping,
5 and shall seek the LORD their God. They shall inquire
concerning Zion with their faces [b] thitherward, *saying*,
Come ye, and [c] join yourselves to the LORD in an everlasting
covenant that shall not be forgotten.

6 My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have

[a] Or, *broken down* [b] † Heb. *hitherward.*
[c] Or, *they shall join themselves*

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guished. The gods of Babylon are put to confusion by the inevitable disaster that has overtaken their city.

idols: or 'idol blocks.' This contemptuous term is a favourite one with Ezekiel.

3. Cf. iv. 6, 7, 25. Jeremiah's characteristic 'out of the north,' applied to the Scythians and then the Babylonians, is here borrowed to describe the foe who is to destroy Babylon. It suits the Medes better than the Persians; but the north had a suggestion of mystery, and the mention of it heightens the terror. For the close of the verse cf. ix. 10.

4, 5. In these beautiful verses the author takes up the ideas of the reunion of Israel in their return to Zion, and of their penitence for their sin. Cf. iii. 12, 13, 18, 21–25, xxiii. 6, xxxi. 1, 9, 18, 19, xxxiii. 7.

5. thitherward. The literal rendering 'hitherward' should have been substituted; the author was accordingly resident in Palestine.

everlasting covenant: cf. xxxii. 40.

6. The verse describes the evil condition of the people, the shepherds who should have guided them aright have led them astray. The Hebrew text is uncertain, the rendering in the E.V. follows the Hebrew margin and the LXX. The consonantal text is generally rendered 'on the seducing mountains,' but 'apostate' would be a more accurate rendering than 'seducing.' There might be a reference to the high-places. It would be better to accept the rendering, 'they have turned them away on the

caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on
the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill,
they have forgotten their resting place. All that found 7
them have devoured them: and their adversaries said,
We offend not, because they have sinned against the
Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope
of their fathers. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and 8
go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the
he-goats before the flocks. For, lo, I will stir up and 9
cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great
nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be

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mountains.' Some think that this refers to the worship at the high-places, on the ground that the mountains afford a suitable pasturage for sheep. But this introduces a prosaic touch into the metaphor. The meaning is that instead of being kept in the green pastures, beside the still waters, they have been sent out on the bleak mountains, where grass is scarce, where movement is difficult and sometimes dangerous, and where they can easily be lost. They wander from mountain to mountain, vainly seeking to better their lot, and cannot find their way back to the pastures from which they have strayed. Cf. xxiii. 1 ff., Ezek. xxxiv.

7. The verse is an echo of ii. 3, where we read 'all that devour him shall be held guilty.' Here Israel's enemies devour him, and say 'We are not guilty,' as their words should be rendered to retain the correspondence with ii. 3. Cf. also Zech. xi. 5, which apparently imitates our passage.

the habitation of justice. This description of Yahweh as 'the homestead of righteousness' is peculiar, and apparently due to a misunderstanding of xxxi. 23, where in the Hebrew the words immediately follow, though they do not stand in apposition to 'Yahweh,' but are a designation of Jerusalem.

even the LORD. The words are very awkward in the Hebrew, and should be omitted, with the LXX.

8. The writer exhorts the Jews to leave Babylon in haste, echoing Isa. xlviii. 20; but he employs an original metaphor. As the he-goats push to the front to pass through the gate when it is opened, before the rest of the flock, so let the Jews be the first to leave; other peoples will follow their example.

9. The reason for the exhortation to escape with speed; the northern nations are being incited to attack Babylon.

taken: their arrows shall be as of [a] an expert mighty man;
10 [b] none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil:
11 all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD. Because
ye are glad, because ye rejoice, O ye that plunder mine
heritage, because ye are wanton as an heifer [c] that treadeth
12 out *the corn*, and neigh as strong horses; your mother
shall be sore ashamed; she that bare you shall be confounded:
behold, she shall be the hindermost of the
13 nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because

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[a] Or, according to another reading, *a mighty man that maketh childless* [b] †Or, *that returneth not* [c] †Or, *at grass*

---

expert mighty man. This is preferable to the margin, which presupposes a slightly different vocalization.

none . . . in vain: i.e. the arrows all strike their mark. But since arrows do not 'return' as the sword does, after doing execution, to its sheath (2 Sam. i. 22), it is better to adopt the margin, taking the reference to be to the warrior, but rendering 'that returneth not empty,' i. e. the warrior wins great spoil, as the next verse says.

11. Because. This rendering yields the sense that the punishment on Babylon described in 12 is due to the exultation of the Babylonians over the spoiling of Judah. But it is better to render 'Though,' i. e. in spite of their affluence and luxury they shall be brought low. There is a suggestion that the wealth which makes their riotous living possible is gained by plunder of other nations, Israel of course being singled out for special mention.

that treadeth out the corn. This follows the punctuation of the Hebrew text; the meaning is that the cattle engaged in threshing could eat their fill since they were unmuzzled (Deut. xxv. 4), and, as we see clearly from Hos. x. 11, the work of treading out the corn was pleasanter than ploughing with a rider on the back. The marginal rendering is that of the LXX and Vulgate; it presupposes a slightly different punctuation. The verb rendered 'ye are wanton' occurs also in Mal. iii. 20 (E.V. iv. 2), 'and gambol as calves of the stall.' It suits calves better than an heifer, and we should probably slightly alter the Hebrew and read 'as calves at grass,' which is presupposed by the LXX. For 'neigh' cf. v. 8, where, however, it is metaphorical.

12. your mother: i. e. Babylon: the city is regarded as mother of the inhabitants.

a wilderness . . . desert: cf. ii. 6, li. 43.

13. See xviii. 16, xix. 8, xxv. 9, 11, xlix. 17.

of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it
shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon
shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. Set 14
yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye
that bend the bow; shoot at her, spare no arrows: for
she hath sinned against the LORD. Shout against her 15
round about; she hath [a] submitted herself; her bulwarks
are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is the
vengeance of the LORD; take vengeance upon her; as she
hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, 16
and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest:
for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one
to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own
land.

Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him 17
away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and
last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his
bones. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God 18

[a] Heb. *given her hand.*

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14. Once more the foe is incited against Babylon: cf. 9, where also the arrows are specially mentioned; cf. Isa. xiii. 18.

15. submitted herself: probably the correct sense; the margin gives the literal rendering.

bulwarks. The word occurs here only; its sense is disputed, but the R.V. is probably right in the main.

16. Agriculture is at an end in Babylonia, and the foreign residents flee back to their country for fear of the foe (Isa. xiii. 14). The two halves of the verse seem to have no connexion.

17. sheep. The term is probably collective. Cf. 6, but here the point is not simply that the flock has lost its way, but that it has fallen a victim to the lions. Assyria devoured the flesh, and then, to consummate the destruction, Babylon has gnawed the bones. The reference is to the captivity of the Ten Tribes and the oppression of Judah by Assyria, and the deportation of Judah to Babylon.

18. This verse certainly suggests that the Babylonian empire had not been overthrown. Still the date of the prophecy cannot be settled on this ground; it is written from Jeremiah's standpoint.

of Israel: Behold, I will punish the king of Babylon and
19 his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. And
I will bring Israel again to his [a] pasture, and he shall feed
on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon
20 the hills of Ephraim and in Gilead. In those days, and
in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall
be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of
Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon
them whom I leave as a remnant.

21 Go up against the land of [b] Merathaim, even against it,
and against the inhabitants of [c] Pekod: slay and [d] utterly
destroy after them, saith the LORD, and do according to all
22 that I have commanded thee. A sound of battle is in
23 the land, and of great destruction. How is the hammer
of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is
24 Babylon become a desolation among the nations! I have

[a] Or, *fold* [b] That is, *Double rebellion.* [c] That is, *Visitation.*
[d] Heb. *devote.*

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19. Cf. Mic. vii. 14. Israel is brought back from the death described in 17, and returns to its own 'homestead,' i. e. Palestine, where it finds abundant sustenance on the richest pastures.

20. Cf. xxxi. 34, Mic. vii. 18.

21. Merathaim: probably Mât Marrâtim, i. e. South Babylonia, but vocalized in this way in the Hebrew to suggest the sense 'Double rebellion' (or possibly 'Double bitterness'). 'Double' is probably simply an intensive, implying that the land had been exceptionally rebellious, not that it had been rebellious in two different ways. No people is named as the instrument of vengeance; Giesebrecht suggests 'Elam' in place of the awkward 'even against it' (*'ālеyhā*).

Pekod similarly suggests the sense 'Visitation' or 'Punishment.' It is the name of a Babylonian people, the Pukudu; cf. Ezek. xxiii. 23.

after them is rather strange; it is omitted in the LXX, and may be due to dittography. But we might, with a slight alteration, read 'the residue of them' (so Giesebrecht).

23. the hammer: cf. li. 20–23. Cf. Charles Martel; some would add Judas Maccabaeus, though the connexion of the latter word with the Hebrew word for 'hammer' is questionable.

laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon,
and thou wast not aware: thou art found, and also caught,
because thou hast striven against the LORD. The LORD 25
hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the
weapons of his indignation: for the Lord, the LORD of
hosts, hath a work *to do* in the land of the Chaldeans.
Come against her [a] from the utmost border, open her [b] store- 26
houses: cast her up as heaps, and [c] destroy her utterly:
let nothing of her be left. Slay all her bullocks; let them 27
go down to the slaughter: woe unto them! for their day
is come, the time of their visitation. The voice of them 28
that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare
in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance
of his temple. Call together [d] the archers against Babylon, 29
all them that bend the bow; camp against her round
about; let none thereof escape: recompense her according
to her work; according to all that she hath done, do unto
her: for she hath been proud against the LORD, against

[a] †Or, *from every quarter*

[b] †Or, *granaries*

[c] Heb. *devote her.*

[d] Or, *many*

---

26. The spoilers are invited to come from every quarter, to open her granaries. The following clause 'cast her up as heaps' is difficult; the meaning is taken to be as heaps of corn, but the contents of the granaries are not cast up *as* heaps of corn, since they are heaps of corn. Cornill follows Aquila in reading 'as heapers up' (of sheaves). The mention of 'devotion,' i. e. the ban, in the next clause, shows that Deut. xiii. 16 is in the writer's mind, according to which an idolatrous city is to be placed under the ban, its inhabitants and cattle destroyed, and all its spoil heaped up in the midst of the street and consumed by fire.

27. bullocks: figurative for her young warriors rather than her magnates: cf. Isa. xxxiv. 7.

28. Zion is in existence at the time. The closing words, 'the vengeance of the Temple,' mean the vengeance for its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar. They may have been inserted here from li. 11, since they are absent in the LXX.

29. For **the archers** cf. 14, and for the close of the verse Isa. xxxvii. 23.

30 the Holy One of Israel. Therefore shall her young men
fall in her streets, and all her men of war shall be brought
31 to silence in that day, saith the LORD. Behold, I am
against thee, [a] O thou proud one, saith the Lord, the
LORD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will
32 visit thee. And [b] the proud one shall stumble and fall,
and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in
his cities, and it shall devour all that are round about
him.

33 Thus saith the LORD of hosts: The children of Israel
and the children of Judah are oppressed together: and
all that took them captives hold them fast; they refuse
34 to let them go. Their redeemer is strong; the LORD of
hosts is his name: he shall throughly plead their cause,
that he may give rest to the earth, and disquiet the inhabi-
35 tants of Babylon. A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith
the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon
36 her princes, and upon her wise men. A sword is upon

[a] †Heb. *O Pride.* [b] †Heb. *Pride.*

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30. See xlix. 26, from which it is repeated. Graf took it to be a quotation written on the margin here, and mistakenly inserted in the text; but his view is not generally accepted.

31, 32. The margins would perhaps have been better: 'Pride' is used as a proper name for Babylon, here and in the next verse. In these verses xxi. 13, 14 are clearly before the writer's mind. For the close of 31 cf. 27^b, for 32^a cf. Amos v. 2.

33. The association of the northern tribes with Judah is curious, since it was the Assyrians who carried away the former into captivity. For the close of the verse cf. Isa. xiv. 17.

34. The earth is to be at peace by the discomfiture of the Babylonians who have so long disturbed its rest: cf. Isa. xiv. 5–8, 16.

Their redeemer is strong: cf. Prov. xxiii. 11; Isa. xliii. 14, xlvii. 4.

35. We should perhaps render 'Sword, be upon the Chaldeans!' and similarly throughout the passage.

36. boasters. The reference is generally taken to be to the lying prophets and diviners. P. Haupt, with a slight correction, reads a Babylonian word meaning 'diviners.'

the [a] boasters, and they shall dote: a sword is upon her
mighty men, and they shall be dismayed. A sword is 37
upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all
the mingled people that are in the midst of her, and they
shall become as women: a sword is upon her treasures,
and they shall be robbed. A drought is upon her waters, 38
and they shall be dried up: for it is a land of graven
images, and they are mad upon [b] idols. [c] Therefore the 39
wild beasts of the desert with the [d] wolves shall dwell there,
and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and it shall be no
more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from
generation to generation. As when God overthrew Sodom 40
and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the
LORD; so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son

[a] Heb. *boastings.* [b] Heb. *terrors.* [c] See Isa. xiii. 21, 22
[d] Heb. *howling creatures.*

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37. the mingled people: see xxv. 20. Generally it is thought that foreign soldiers hired by Babylon are intended. Cheyne thinks of 'the Arabian population in Babylonia' (*Enc. Bib.* 3099).

38. drought. The word in the unpointed text is the same as that used for 'sword' in the rest of the passage; and we should probably render it 'sword' here. The present pointing seems to be due to the feeling that 'sword' was incongruous in this context, whereas 'drought' was suitable. But the words are not to be pressed with prosaic literalism; and the symmetry of the passage is disturbed if 'drought' is substituted for 'sword.'

and they are mad upon idols: rather 'and with idols do they make themselves mad;' but the Versions read, with different pointing, 'and they boast themselves of idols,' as in Ps. xcvii. 7. The 'idols' are properly 'Terrors,' the hideous figures worshipped by the people.

39, 40. Now follows a passage which, like Isa. xxxiv. 9–17, is based on Isa. xiii. 19–22. The second verse is practically identical with xlix. 18. The ruins of a city are to this day avoided by the Bedawin, who believe that they are the haunt not of wild animals alone but of uncanny creatures. In this passage the latter seem to be absent. 'The wild beasts of the desert' may be the correct rendering; some translate 'wild cats' (so Bochart). For 'wolves' some prefer 'jackals.'

41 of man sojourn therein. [a] Behold, a people cometh from
the north; and a great nation, and many kings shall be
42 stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth. They
lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no
mercy; their voice roareth like the sea, and they ride
upon horses; every one set in array, as a man to the
43 battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon. The king
of Babylon hath heard the fame of them, and his hands
wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of him, *and* pangs
44 as of a woman in travail. [b] Behold, he shall come up
like a lion from the pride of Jordan against the strong
habitation: but I will suddenly make them run away from
her; and whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her:
for who is like me? and who will appoint me a time?
and who is the shepherd that will stand before me?
45 Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath
taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath
purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely they
shall drag them away, *even* the little ones of the flock;
surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.
46 At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth trembleth,
and the cry is heard among the nations.

51 Thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will raise up against

[a] See ch. vi. 22–24. [b] See ch. xlix. 19–21.

41–43. These verses are copied, with trifling alterations and necessary adjustment to Babylon, from vi. 22–24.

44–46. These verses are taken from xlix. 19–21, with necessary changes due to the change in reference from Edom to Babylon and some other alterations. See the notes on that passage.

46. among the nations. The noise of Edom's fall is heard in the Red Sea; that of Babylon's fall 'among the nations.'

li. 1. Leb-kamai. The meaning is explained in the margin ('heart' means 'centre'); the cypher is *Atbash*, for which see notes on xxv. 26. Since the LXX read 'Kasdim,' i.e. Chaldea, it is

Babylon, and against them that dwell in [a] Leb-kamai,
a destroying wind. And I will send unto Babylon 2
[b] strangers, that shall fan her; and they shall empty her
land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her
round about. [c] Let not the archer bend his bow, and let 3
him not lift himself up in his coat of mail: and spare ye
not her young men; [d] destroy ye utterly all her host.
And they shall fall down slain in the land of the Chaldeans, 4
and thrust through in her streets. For Israel is not 5

[a] That is, *The heart of them that rise up against me.* According to ancient tradition, a cypher for *Casdim*, that is, Chaldea.
[b] †Or, *fanners*
[c] Or, as otherwise read, *Against* him that *bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against* him that *lifteth himself up &c.*
[d] Heb. *devote ye all &c.*

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probable that this was the original text, and that the substitution of 'Leb-kamai' originated in an ingenious marginal gloss.

a destroying wind. A comparison with 11 suggests that we should render, with most recent scholars, 'the spirit of a destroyer.'

2. strangers. The margin 'fanners' is better, since the noun thus corresponds with the verb, and this sense, which requires simply a slight change in the pointing, is adopted by the Syriac and Vulgate. The metaphor is taken from the winnowing of corn.

3. The text is uncertain and probably corrupt. The rendering in R.V. text is preferable to that in the margin; the meaning is, Let the armies of Babylon make no resistance to the enemy. But this does not suit the latter part of the verse, where the enemy is addressed. Various suggestions have been made to cure the corruption; none is quite satisfactory. The simplest is that of Cornill, that the negatives should be omitted; the words will then have reference to the assault of the enemy on Babylon. It is of course a precarious emendation, though supported by the LXX.

4. Cf. Isa. xiii. 15, Ezek. xxviii. 23, Lam. iv. 9.

5. This is a difficult verse; Graf thought that it must have been inserted by another hand, on account of the lack of connexion with the context. The word rendered 'forsaken' is literally 'widowed' (cf. Isa. liv. 4); but strangely the masculine is used, whereas elsewhere Yahweh is the husband, Israel the wife. The second half of the verse is also difficult. By 'their land' it seems as if the land of Israel and Judah is meant, the sense being that Yahweh has not forsaken them though their guilt might well have caused Him to do so. But the Hebrew, especially in view of l. 29,

forsaken, nor Judah, of his God, of the LORD of hosts; though their land is full of guilt against the Holy One of
6 Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and save every man his life; be not cut off in her iniquity: for it is the time of the LORD's vengeance; he will render unto her
7 a recompence. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.

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favours the reference to Babylonia, and we should in that case substitute 'but' for 'though.' If, however, 'their land' means Babylonia, the two halves of the verse seem to be in their wrong order, and 5^b should follow 4, and the word rendered 'though' should bear its usual sense 'for' (so Cornill). Verse 5^a still remains somewhat isolated; Cornill thinks that a couplet has fallen out after it, and suggests that it may have run as in Isa. liv. 5, 'But his creator is his husband, and his redeemer the Holy One of Israel.'

6. The people to whom this is addressed are not named; they might be the foreign residents generally, but a reference to 45, where the verse is largely repeated, favours the view that the Jews are intended, as in l. 6 and the Deutero-Isaianic parallels Isa. xlviii. 20, lii. 12. The reason for flight is that they may not be involved in the overthrow of Babylon: cf. Rev. xviii. 4. For the latter part of the verse cf. l. 15, Isa. xxxiv. 8, lix. 18, lxiii. 4.

7. The passage recalls the vision of the cup in xxv. But the resemblance is superficial. There the cup was that of Yahweh's fury. Babylon might no doubt be called a cup in Yahweh's hand, in the sense that she was His instrument in the execution of judgement, just as Assyria was the rod of His anger (Isa. x. 5). But here the idea is rather of her luxury and sinfulness, which have exerted a baneful influence on the nations. The thought is therefore quite parallel to that in Rev. xvii. 4, which is based on this passage, and Nah. iii. 4. Only we should omit 'in the Lord's hand' as an insertion under the influence of xxv. 15, 16; since Yahweh can hardly have been represented as using Babylon to demoralize the nations. The epithet 'golden,' on the other hand, is not to be struck out on the ground that a metal cup is not broken by a fall (8). It is deliberately introduced to suggest the seductive luxury of Babylon, and the subject in 8 is 'Babylon'; the metaphor of the cup is still in the author's mind, but by substituting the literal for the figurative, he avoids the incongruity of representing the golden cup as broken.

Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; 8
take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We 9
would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake
her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her
judgement reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to
the skies. The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: 10
come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD
our God. Make [a] sharp the arrows; [b] hold firm the 11

[a] †Or, *bright* Heb. *clean*. [b] Heb. *fill*.

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8. The opening of the verse is derived from Isa. xxi. 9. The latter part introduces a new metaphor indicating Babylon's desperate condition: cf. viii. 22, xxx. 12, 13, and especially xlvi. 11. The words are not spoken with sympathy but with triumphant irony.

9. Since the speakers in 10 are the Jews, it is natural to suppose that they are the speakers in this verse. But then we have the strange assertion at the beginning of the verse that they would have healed Babylon, which is quite irreconcilable with the attitude of the Jewish captives. Nor do the words 'let us go every one into his own country' suit the Jews, but must be spoken by exiles from different countries. To strike out the clause or part of it is arbitrary. We must then assume that the speakers are foreign residents in Babylon and presumably not captives, since the latter would hail the downfall of the oppressor. They answer the ironical invitation at the end of 8. They have been able to find no cure, and must abandon her to her fate, since her guilt and her punishment mount to the skies.

10. If the view taken in the preceding note is correct, this verse cannot continue the utterance in 9, in spite of the apparent links between the two—the contrast between 'her judgement' and 'our righteousness,' and the parallel between 'forsake her, and let us go' and 'come, and let us declare.' The first clause means that Yahweh has vindicated the Jews, put them in the right, by the overthrow of Babylon.

11. The exhortations in this verse and the next are addressed to the enemy. The first clause comes in strangely, the second clause carries on the thought of 10, while the first clause would be more in place in connexion with the other preparations for conflict mentioned in 12, or in 27 to which Cornill transfers it. The arrows are to be polished (cf. Isa. xlix. 2), so that they may pierce their victims more easily. The rendering 'hold firm the shields' is dubious. The verb, as the margin says, means 'fill,' so that the

[a] shields: the LORD hath stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes; because his device is against Babylon, to destroy it: for it is the vengeance of the LORD, the ven-
12 geance of his temple. Set up a standard against the walls of Babylon, make the watch strong, set the watchmen, prepare the ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised and done that which he spake concerning the inhabitants
13 of Babylon. O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, the measure of
14 thy [b] covetousness. The LORD of hosts hath sworn by

[a] Or, *suits of armour* [b] Or, *dishonest gain*

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sense is rather 'gird the shields closely to you.' Giesebrecht reads a verb meaning to 'scour' or 'polish' (*mirṭu*). Rothstein suggests 'anoint' (cf. 2 Sam. i. 21). But the translation 'shields' is not certain; W. E. Barnes argues in detail for the meaning 'armour' or 'equipment' (*Expository Times*, x. 43-45); if his reasoning is sound the margin 'suits of armour' should be adopted, and no emendation of the verb is required.

the kings of the Medes. The LXX reading, 'the king of the Medes' should be substituted. The reference to the Medes seems to have been suggested by Isa. xiii. 17.

for it is . . . temple: see on l. 28; cf. xlvi. 10, l. 15; Isa. xxxiv. 8.

12. Exhortation to begin the blockade of Babylon and set ambuscades, not merely to intercept any who ventured out of the city, or to cut off stragglers after a sortie, but to take advantage of a sortie to push through the gates (cf. Joshua viii. 12-19, Judges xx. 29-40). The 'watchmen' are not those who are placed on the alert to see what happens, but those who guard the city closely.

13. many waters: cf. l. 38, Rev. xvii. 1, Ps. cxxxvii. 1. The Euphrates, the numerous canals, and the pools (cf. 32 marg.) gave the Babylonians a sense of their security, as their rocky fastnesses gave Edom (xlix. 16), and the Nile and the canals gave No-Amon (Nah. iii. 8).

the measure of thy covetousness. This clause has occasioned much discussion; the word rendered 'measure' means 'cubit;' while that rendered 'covetousness' also means 'cutting off.' The sense is that the prescribed limit of Babylon's existence has been reached, and it will now be cut off. The metaphor is taken from weaving, and is best illustrated by Isa. xxxviii. 12.

14. Cf. Amos vi. 8. The sense of the R.V. is that Yahweh will certainly fill Babylon with enemies as numerous, rapacious, and destructive as locusts. Another view is that we should translate himself, *saying*, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with the cankerworm; and they shall lift up a shout against thee.

[a] He hath made the earth by his power, he hath esta- 15
blished the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding
hath he stretched out the heavens: when he uttereth his 16
voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he
causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth;
he maketh lightnings for the rain, and bringeth forth the
wind out of his treasuries. Every man is become brutish 17
and is without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to
shame by his graven image: for his molten image is false-
hood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, 18
a work of delusion: in the time of their visitation they
shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like these; 19
for he is the former of all things; and *Israel* is the tribe
of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name.

Thou art my [b] battle axe and weapons of war: and 20

[a] See ch. x. 12–16. [b] †Or, *maul*

'though I fill thee,' and explain that, be Babylon's population multitudinous as the locusts, the shout of triumph will yet be raised over her by her conquerors. The 'cankerworm' seems to be the locust in its pupa stage.

15–19. These verses repeat, with very trifling difference, x. 12–16, and the notes on that passage must be consulted for the exegesis. It is difficult to understand why it was inserted here, where it is quite irrelevant. Apparently it was introduced by some reader to substantiate the certainty that Yahweh's oath will be accomplished, by asserting His omnipotence and the impotence of idols.

20–23. In this passage, marked with similar repetition as l. 35–38, it is not clear what power is addressed. But the arguments that it is Babylon seem to be convincing. When the interpolation 15–19 has been removed, 20–23 connects with 13, 14, in which Babylon is addressed. Further, in l. 23 Babylon is described as 'the hammer of the whole earth,' and immediately after our passage as a 'destroying mountain . . . which destroyest all the earth' (25). Other identifications are unsuitable, because nothing hints that there is a change in the reference of the second person.

with thee will I break in pieces the nations; and with
21 thee will I destroy kingdoms; and with thee will I break
in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will
I break in pieces the chariot and him that rideth therein;
22 and with thee will I break in pieces man and woman;
and with thee will I break in pieces the old man and the
youth; and with thee will I break in pieces the young
23 man and the maid; and with thee will I break in pieces
the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in
pieces the husbandman and his yoke *of oxen*; and with
thee will I break in pieces [a] governors and deputies.
24 And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants
of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in
your sight, saith the LORD.

[a] Or, *lieutenants*

The future tenses in the R.V. should be changed into presents, expressing habitual action. Verse 24 favours to some extent the other view, but is not incompatible with that adopted.

20. battle axe. The word means rather 'battle-hammer' or 'club;' 'mace' would be a good rendering. This formidable weapon was much used by the Assyrians, probably also by the Babylonians.

weapons. Perhaps, with a change in punctuation, we should read the singular.

23. governors and deputies. The same combination occurs in Ezek. xxiii. 6, 12, 23, where it is rendered 'governors and rulers.' Both words are of Assyrian origin; the former might be rendered 'satraps,' the latter 'viceroys' (so Lofthouse on Ezek. xxiii. 6). The use of these terms does not necessarily imply that the mace breaks the magnates of the Babylonian empire; similar officials might be found in other kingdoms.

24. But while Babylon is the hammer in the hands of the Almighty, He will recompense her for her overthrow of Zion. Such a statement is out of harmony with Jeremiah's point of view. It is true that Isaiah can speak of Assyria as the rod of Yahweh's anger, and yet announce that when Yahweh has chastised His people with it, He will break it and fling it aside. But Assyria is not punished for its mis-handling of Judah, but for its boastfulness against Yahweh (Isa. x. 5–15).

in your sight: to be connected with 'I will render.'

Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, 25
saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: and
I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee
down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt
mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for 26
a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be
desolate for ever, saith the Lord. Set ye up a standard 27
in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations,[a] prepare
the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms
of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz: appoint a marshal

[a] Heb. *sanctify.*

25, 26. Since Babylon is situated in a plain, the reference to it as a mountain must be metaphorical; it is so called as lifted above other countries. Whether one who was actually familiar with the country would have chosen a figurative designation which was literally so inappropriate is questionable. Probably, as Budde points out, Ezekiel's prophecy against mount Seir (Ezek. xxxv) is before the writer's mind. The phrase 'destroying mountain' comes from 2 Kings xxiii. 13 (see R.V. margin). It is natural to think of the 'mountain' as a volcano. But this is very questionable: the mountain is regarded as itself burnt to a cinder, rather than as belching forth fire, and therefore as yielding no stones suitable for building, the action of the fire making the stones unfit for the purpose. The writer may have thought of the mountain as a great mass of limestone (cf. Isa. xxxiii. 12), itself piled high upon cliffs down which it is cast.

26. The verse seems to be an imitation of Isa. xxx. 14.

27. Once more the author begins a description of the attack on Babylon.

Ararat (Gen. viii. 4, 2 Kings xix. 37) is the Assyrian *Urarṭu* and the Armenian *Ayrarat.* It embraced part of Armenia, but the limits varied: properly it was in the northern part of Armenia, north-west of Lake Van. **Minni** is the cuneiform *Mannai*, and is placed by some between Lake Van and Lake Urumia, by others to the south or south-east of the latter. **Ashkenaz** presumably in the neighbourhood of the preceding. It may be inferred from Gen. x. 3 that they were akin to the Cimmerians. It is often identified with the Assyrian *Ashguz*; the 'n' may be mistaken insertion in the Hebrew, or it may have been in the original word but omitted in Assyrian.

marshal. The Hebrew word occurs also in Nah. iii. 17, there also in connexion with locusts. It is generally regarded as the

against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough
28 cankerworm. [a] Prepare against her the nations, the kings
of the Medes, the governors thereof, and all the deputies
29 thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land
trembleth and is in pain: for the purposes of the LORD
against Babylon do stand, to make the land of Babylon
30 a desolation, without inhabitant. The mighty men of
Babylon have forborne to fight, they remain in their strong
holds; their might hath failed; they are become as
women: her dwelling places are set on fire; her bars
31 are broken. One post shall run to meet another, and one
messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon
32 that his city is taken on every quarter: and the [b] passages
are surprised, and the [c] reeds they have burned with fire,
and the men of war are affrighted.

[a] Heb. *sanctify.* [b] Or, *fords* [c] Or, *marshes* Heb. *pools.*

Assyrian *dupšarru*, 'tablet-writer.' Here it might mean a scribe who had the duty of enlisting the soldiers; but this does not suit Nah. iii. 17, where they are compared to 'swarms of grasshoppers,' nor yet the present passage, since, as Graf pointed out, the term should be taken as a collective, parallel to the collective singular rendered 'horses' in the next clause. Some type of troop, as he says, seems to be intended.

the rough cankerworm: the locust in its pupa-stage, when the wings are still enclosed in sheaths which stand out on the back. Their worst ravages are accomplished in this stage.

28. Read 'king' for 'kings,' and 'his governors,' 'his deputies. On these terms see note on 23.

30. A vivid description of the capture of the city now follows.

31. post, or 'courier,' literally 'runner.' The couriers and newsbearers meet each other as they come from all sides to tell the king that the city is captured.

32. passages: i. e. ferries, not fords.

reeds. As the margin indicates, the word properly means 'pools,' but to say that the pools are burned is too extravagant an hyperbole. The text seems to be corrupt. Duhm suggests 'defences,' 'barricades.' Graetz, Cheyne in the *Pulpit Commentary*, and now Coste, read 'palaces.' Cornill supposes that some words have fallen out; similarly Rothstein.

For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 33
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor at the
time when it is trodden; yet a little while, and the time
of harvest shall come for her. Nebuchadrezzar the king of 34
Babylon hath devoured [a] me, he hath crushed [a] me, he
hath made [a] me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed [a] me
up like a dragon, he hath filled his maw with my delicates;
he hath cast [a] me out. [b] The violence done to me and 35
to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the [c] inhabitant of
Zion say; and, My blood be upon the inhabitants of
Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. Therefore thus saith the 36

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[a] Another reading is, *us*. [b] Heb. *My wrong and my flesh.* [c] Heb. *inhabitress.*

33. When the harvest-time approaches, the threshing-floor is trodden down smooth and hard, and when the corn has been reaped it is threshed upon it. The metaphor is a fine one, but is not clearly carried out. At first Babylon is compared to the threshing-floor itself; as this is trodden down flat, so it will be trampled on and levelled with the ground. A more conventional metaphor would have been to liken it to the corn on the threshing-floor trampled by oxen who draw the threshing-sledge over it: cf. Isa. xxi. 10, Amos i. 3, Mic. iv. 13. This is perhaps suggested by the last clause: Babylon is like the corn which is to be reaped and then threshed. The sense of this clause, however, may be that Babylon is like a cornfield, which is soon to be reaped, stripped of all its golden splendour. But whichever view be adopted, we seem to have two metaphors combined.

the time of harvest. We should perhaps read, with LXX and Syriac, 'the harvest,' or, with a slight change, 'the reaper.'

34. Israel recounts the injuries the king of Babylon has done her. The R.V. rightly prefers the singular pronoun 'me' throughout. The reference in the 'empty vessel' is to the loss of all which she has suffered. The king is likened to the mythical dragon, for which we may compare the designations of the world-empires in Isa. xxvii. 1. He has swallowed the people, and also the treasures it had formerly enjoyed.

cast me out. This is the sense, it requires a slightly different pointing; the verb as pointed means 'rinsed me out.'

35. Cf. Gen. xvi. 5.

36. To this invocation of vengeance on Babylon, Yahweh responds with the assurance that He will avenge His people upon

LORD: Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance
for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her fountain
37 dry. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place
for jackals, an astonishment, and an hissing, without
38 inhabitant. They shall roar together like young lions;
39 they shall growl as lions' whelps. When they are heated,
I will make their feast, and I will make them drunken,
that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and
40 not wake, saith the LORD. I will bring them down like
41 lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he-goats. How is
[a] Sheshach taken! and the praise of the whole earth surprised!
how is Babylon become [b] a desolation among
42 the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is
43 covered with the [c] multitude of the waves thereof. Her
cities are become [b] a desolation, a dry land, and a desert,

[a] See ch. xxv. 26. [b] Or, *an astonishment* [c] Or, *tumult*

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her. The 'sea' is either the Euphrates (called so like the Nile, Isa. xviii. 2, xix. 5; Nah. iii. 8), or the lake dug by Nebuchadnezzar. In Herodotus (I. 185) we have an account of a lake built by Nitocris.

37. Cf. ix. 11, x. 22, xviii. 16; Isa. xiii. 22.

38. The Babylonians are like lions growling with satisfaction over their prey: cf. Amos iii. 4, Isa. v. 29.

39. Cf. 57. The metaphor glides from the lions feasting, to men at a banquet, who are overcome by wine and pass into the everlasting sleep

When they are heated. The sense is not quite clear; it is generally taken to be when they are hot with desire. Then Yahweh prepares their drinking banquet. Giesebrecht reads 'when I am hot,' i. e. when my wrath burns.

rejoice. This does not suit the context. The LXX rendered 'be stupefied.' This, as Giesebrecht, followed by several scholars, thinks, probably implies a Hebrew verb meaning 'to faint,' as in Isa. li. 20 (*y^eullāphū*).

40. This verse is based on Isa. xxxiv. 6, 7.

41. Sheshach: i. e. Babel: see note on xxv. 26. It is omitted in LXX and Syriac.

42. The sea: not the literal Euphrates, as some take it, but the multitudinous invaders. Cf. Isa. viii. 7, 8.

43. Cf. ii. 6, l. 12, 40.

a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. And I will [a] do judgement upon Bel 44
in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.

My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and save 45
yourselves every man from the fierce anger of the LORD.
And let not your heart faint, neither fear ye for the rumour 46
that shall be heard in the land; for a rumour shall come one year, and after that in another year *shall come* a rumour,

[a] Heb. *visit upon.*

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44. Bel (see note on l. 2) will be compelled to disgorge what he has **swallowed** (see 34). This is not simply the wealth of the nations, but the nations themselves. The passage is thus parallel to the story of the swallowing and vomiting forth of Jonah by the fish, which seems to be a figurative description of the exile and return of Israel.

44^b–49^a. This passage (from 'yea, the wall') is omitted in the LXX. Duhm thinks that it is a first draft of 49^b–53, which was substituted for it by the author or the editor. Verse 45 is parallel to 50, and 47 is largely repeated in 52. Rothstein practically agrees with Duhm; but Cornill agrees with Hitzig that the omission in the LXX was occasioned by the accidental passing from 'Babylon shall fall' in 44 to 'Babylon shall fall' in 49. And in view of the difference between 44^b–49^a and 49^b–53, this is the safer view to take.

the wall of Babylon shall fall. This is not very appropriate in this connexion. Cornill thinks that the parallelism requires a reference to a deity, and suggests 'the Desire of Babylon shall fall,' that is, the chief goddess of Babylon; he compares Dan. xi. 37, 'the desire of women,' which seems from the context to mean a deity, perhaps Tammuz.

45. Cf. 6; Isa. lii. 11.

46. The passage is difficult. The Hebrew text needs some change, but the general sense is given in the R.V. Moreover the passage seems to suggest, in contrast to the general tenor of the oracle, that year after year may go by, while one magnate wars with another, and this rumour gives place to that, and the hope of deliverance seems to grow more and more remote. But we need not assume that the author expected a long period to elapse in

47 and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore,
behold, the days come, that I will do judgement upon
the graven images of Babylon, and her whole land shall
be ashamed; and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.
48 Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein,
shall sing for joy over Babylon; for the spoilers shall
49 come unto her from the north, saith the LORD. [a] As
Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at
50 Babylon shall fall the slain of all the [b] land. Ye that
have escaped the sword, go ye, stand not still; remember
the LORD from afar, and let Jerusalem come into
51 your mind. We are ashamed, because we have heard
reproach; confusion hath covered our faces: for strangers

[a] Or, *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and at &c*
[b] †Or, *earth*

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such struggles and rumours. Four or five years would be a brief prelude to the downfall of an empire, and yet it might be a time of racking suspense, intolerably long to live through day by day.

47. This is largely identical with 52, and on that ground deleted by Giesebrecht. 'Therefore' is unsuitable; we might read 'for,' the present text having arisen from assimilation to 52 and the frequency with which 'Therefore' is used with this formula. Cornill suggests 'rulers' instead of 'graven images,' which he thinks is also due to 52. It fits on to the close of 46, and the triple reference to the punishment of Babylon's gods in 44, 47, 52 is thus avoided.

all her slain shall fall: i. e. her inhabitants shall fall slain.

48. Cf. Isa. xliv. 23; for 48^b cf. 53^b.

49. The text is difficult. In the former part of the verse we should render (cf. margin) 'Babel also is to fall, O ye slain of Israel.' But it would be better, repeating a consonant, to read 'for the slain of Israel,' and continue 'As for Babel have fallen the slain of all the earth.'

50. The Jews, who have escaped death at the hands of the Babylonians, are bidden remember Yahweh and bethink themselves of Jerusalem, with the intention of returning.

51. The reply of the Jews to the exhortation in 50. They are exposed to reproach and covered with confusion, since foreigners have penetrated into the sacred places of the Temple; see note on Lam. i. 10.

are come into the sanctuaries of the LORD's house. Where- 52
fore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will
do judgement upon her graven images; and through all
her land the wounded shall groan. Though Babylon 53
should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify
the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come
unto her, saith the LORD. The sound of a cry from 54
Babylon, and of great destruction from the land of the
Chaldeans! for the LORD spoileth Babylon, and destroyeth 55
out of her the great voice; and their waves roar like many
waters, the noise of their voice is uttered: for the spoiler 56
is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty
men are taken, their bows are broken in pieces: for the
LORD is a God of recompences, he shall surely requite.
And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her 57
governors and her deputies, and her mighty men; and
they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the
King, whose name is the LORD of hosts. Thus saith the 58
LORD of hosts: [a] The broad walls of Babylon shall be

[a] Or, *The walls of broad Babylon*

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52. Since Babylon has violated the sanctity of Yahweh's house, He will judge her idols. For 52^b cf. Ezek. xxvi. 15.

53. Cf. Isa. xiv. 12–14, Hab. ii. 9, Obad. 3; for 53^b cf. 48^b.

54. Cf. xlviii. 3, l. 22.

55. Yahweh spoils Babylon and brings to silence all its din; the foe sweeps into it like a great sea (cf. 42), its roar drowning the roar of the doomed city. Cf. vi. 23, Isa. xvii. 12.

56. The former part of the verse largely repeats 48^b, 53^b; for the latter part cf. Isa. lix. 18.

57. This closely resembles 39; for 'her governors and her deputies' cf. 23, 28.

58. walls. The singular should be read, as in LXX and Vulgate, in agreement with the singular adjective. The wall of Babylon was famous in antiquity; Herodotus says that it was 'fifty royal cubits in breadth, and in height two hundred' (I. 178), but his statement is generally regarded as exaggerated. The fortifications were actually destroyed by Darius.

utterly [a] overthrown, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; [b] and the peoples shall labour for vanity, and the nations for the fire; and they shall be weary.

59 [B] The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded

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[a] †Or, *made bare*   [b] See Hab. ii. 13.

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and the peoples . . . weary. The text should be slightly altered, and we should read at the end, 'and the nations shall weary themselves for the fire.' The passage occurs, except for the interchange of 'vanity' and 'fire,' in Hab. ii. 13. Recent scholars generally agree with Graf that in the latter passage it is a quotation, and that both our passage and Hab. ii. 13 are derived from the same original. The point of the quotation here is that in the overthrow of Babylon we have a fulfilment of the ancient saying.

for the fire: i. e. their labour is all destined to come to nought.

li. 59-64. JEREMIAH BIDS SERAIAH READ THE BOOK OF BABYLON'S DOOM, AND THEN SINK IT IN THE EUPHRATES.

Since in 60^{b} the words written by Jeremiah, which Seraïah was to read and cast in the Euphrates, are apparently identified with the preceding oracle l. 2—li. 58, it is not unnatural that several scholars should have inferred that the story is as fictitious as the oracle itself is spurious. It is not necessary, however, to accept this identification, and Budde, followed by Cornill and Driver, argues forcibly for the historicity of the story, regarding the oracle entrusted to Seraiah as quite distinct from that which has preceded. The reference to Seraiah is itself a strong support to it. He was the brother of Baruch, though this is not emphasized as it would have been by a later writer anxious to guarantee his story; but we learn it simply by combining the account of his ancestry with that of Baruch (xxxii. 12). It is therefore probable that Seraiah undertook a journey to Babylon. So much is admitted by Duhm, who rejects the story as a whole. Whether Zedekiah went to Babylon at the same time is uncertain. The statement in the Hebrew text that Seraiah was 'quartermaster' does not prove a personal visit of the king to Babylon, though it agrees well with it, since he might have acted in this capacity for an embassy. According to the LXX, he was 'commissary of the tribute,' and went 'from Zedekiah.' In view of this uncertainty in the text we cannot feel sure that the king visited Babylon at this time. Nevertheless we can well understand, as Duhm himself allows, in view of the political situation, why he should visit Babylon, since suspicion

Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he

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of complicity in the movement for revolt (xxvii) might well have fallen upon him (see vol. i, p. 23, and the Introduction to xxvii, xxviii). But if Seraiah went to Babylon, with or without the king, we may argue with some confidence that he received a commission from Jeremiah. The story of his journey would otherwise have hardly come down to us, since Baruch's memoirs seem to have been exclusively devoted to the prophet and his work. If the story related anything incredible about Jeremiah we should be justified in setting it aside. But he looked forward to the ultimate overthrow of Babylon, and while he would hardly have fanned the flame of fanatical patriotism among the exiles or the Jews who remained in Palestine, he may well have expressed his conviction in this striking way to an adherent. He would thus give his own circle a proof that his predictions of Babylon's triumph and Judah's downfall at her hands were not an abandonment of his faith in the restoration and high destiny of Israel, or tantamount to the prediction of Babylon's permanent supremacy. And if to this it be replied that he could have disabused them of any misconception as to his attitude by a strong clear statement of his real position, without adopting such a theatrical method as is here described, it may be replied that the method adopted was far more effective for his purpose. We are already familiar with the Hebrew idea of prophecy, that it did not merely announce the future but helped to create it. The prophetic word released energies which achieved its own fulfilment. But the solemn act was even more potent, in that the word was not only uttered and committed to writing, but taken to Babylon itself and sunk in its river, so that the doom it announced might cleave to the city and spread with the flow of the stream to its every part, and thus effect its final overthrow. Thus Jeremiah gave an assurance of its downfall not by any theatrical piece of symbolism, but by himself setting in motion the forces which were to effect it. That there is an element of sympathetic magic in the sinking of the stone with the oracle bound to it is not to be denied ; but it would be unreasonable to take Jeremiah out of his intellectual environment. The conception of prophecy as working out its own fulfilment is not magical ; the word of the living God was itself living and active, and could not return to Him void.

li. 59–64. Jeremiah's injunction to Seraiah when he accompanied him to Babylon. Jeremiah wrote on a scroll the doom of Babylon, and bade Seraiah, when he arrived there, read all the words, and afterwards sink the scroll in the Euphrates, saying, 'Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more.'

li. 59. Cf. xxxii. 12, from which we learn that Seraiah was

went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the
fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was [a] chief cham-
60 berlain. And Jeremiah wrote in [b] a book all the evil that
should come upon Babylon, [S] even all these words that
61 are written concerning Babylon. [B] And Jeremiah said
to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, [c] then see that
62 thou read all these words, [S] and say, O LORD, thou
hast spoken concerning this place, to cut it off, that none
shall dwell therein, neither man nor beast, but that it
63 shall be desolate for ever. [B] And it shall be, when thou
hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt
bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates:
64 and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall

[a] †Or, *quartermaster* [b] Or, *one book* [c] Or, *and shalt see, and read . . . then shalt thou say &c.*

Baruch's brother. On the historicity of the journey and the question whether Zedekiah also went to Babylon see the Introduction to this section.

chief chamberlain. The margin 'quartermaster' is preferable; this official would have to arrange for the halting-place where the company would spend the night. Several prefer the LXX 'commissary of the presents,' i. e. the official who had charge of the presents for the king or the tribute due to him from Judah. It involves only slight change in the Hebrew consonants.

60. book: better **scroll.** The prophecy was probably quite short, and 60^{b}, which seems to identify it with l. 2—li. 58, should be omitted as an editorial link between the narrative and that oracle.

61. We are not to suppose that a public reading is intended, which would have been dangerous and also most unsuited to effect Jeremiah's wishes for the tranquillity of the exiles. It is a secret reading, Seraiah being either alone or with a chosen few. The reading aloud is part of the process by which the oracle is sped on its mission.

62. This verse interrupts the connexion between 61 and 63, and presents other difficulties. It has echoes of the long prophecy on Babylon, l. 3 and l. 26, and should probably be regarded as a later insertion.

63. With the deletion of 62 this connects immediately with 61. On the significance of the action see the Introduction to this section.

not rise again because of the evil that I will bring [a] upon her: and they shall be weary.

[R] Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

[E] [b] Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he 52
began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in 2
the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the LORD did it come 3
to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence: and Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year 4
of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the

[a] Or, *upon her. And they shall be weary: thus far &c.*

[b] See 2 Kings xxiv. 18, &c.

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64. and they shall be weary. This is no part of Seraiah's utterance. The subscription which follows, 'Thus far are the words of Jeremiah,' probably stood once after 58, and when it was removed to its present position, these words, which are one word in the Hebrew, were removed with it, presumably by accident, but possibly to indicate their original position. We might also interpret the words to mean that the words of Jeremiah went down simply to 'and they shall be weary' (58), and did not include 59–64^a. But this is not so likely.

lii. THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM AND FATE OF THE PEOPLE.

This chapter is almost entirely taken from 2 Kings xxiv. 18—xxv. 21, 27–30, but lii. 28–30 is derived from some other source. In accordance with the custom usually adopted in commentaries on Jeremiah, only such notes are here given as are required by differences between the two texts or by additions to the narrative in Kings. For the general exposition of the chapter the student should turn to Dr. Skinner's Commentary on the Books of Kings in this series. The text in Jeremiah is often better preserved than in Kings, but it is unnecessary to make any minute comparison, or to repeat what Dr. Skinner has said on their mutual relations.

lii. 4–16. These verses are also found in a shortened form in xxxix. 1–10.

month, that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he
and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against
5 it; and they built forts against it round about. So the
city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.
6 In the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the
famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for
7 the people of the land. Then a breach was made in the
city, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of
the city by night by the way of the gate between the two
walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans
were against the city round about:) and they went by the
8 way of the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued
after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains
of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.
9 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the
king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; and
10 he [a] gave judgement upon him. And the king of Babylon
slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all
11 the princes of Judah in Riblah. And he put out the eyes
of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in
fetters, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison
till the day of his death.

12 Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month,
which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadrezzar,
king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the
guard, which stood before the king of Babylon, into Jeru-
13 salem: and he burned the house of the Lord, and the

[a] Heb. *spake judgements with him.*

10, 11. These verses appear in an abbreviated form in 2 Kings xxv. 7. Here we have added the slaughter of all the princes of Judah at Riblah, and the statement that Zedekiah was kept in prison to his death.

12. tenth. 2 Kings xxv. 7 reads **seventh.** We have no grounds for a decision between the two.

king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, even
[a] every great house, burned he with fire. And all the 14
army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the
guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.
Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away 15
captive of the poorest sort of the people, and the residue
of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell
away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of
the [b] multitude. But Nebuzaradan the captain of the 16
guard left of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers
and husbandmen. And the pillars of brass that were in 17
the house of the LORD, and the bases and the brasen sea
that were in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldeans
break in pieces, and carried all the brass of them to
Babylon. The pots also, and the shovels, and the snuffers, 18
and the basons, and the spoons, and all the vessels of
brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And 19
the cups, and the firepans, and the basons, and the pots,
and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the bowls;
that which was of gold, in gold, and that which was of
silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. The 20
two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve brasen bulls that
were under the bases, which king Solomon had made for
the house of the LORD: the brass of all these vessels was
without weight. And as for the pillars, the height of the 21
one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a line of twelve cubits
did compass it; and the thickness thereof was four fingers:

[a] Or, *every great man's house* [b] †Or, *artificers*

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15. Omit 'of the poorest sort of the people and:' it is a mistaken insertion from 16, which it contradicts, and is omitted in Kings.

17–23. The account in Kings is considerably abbreviated, especially 21–23 which in Kings occupies only one verse. Dr. Skinner's notes on 1 Kings vii should be consulted in addition to those on the parallels in 2 Kings.

22 it was hollow. And a chapiter of brass was upon it; and
the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, with network
and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of
brass: and the second pillar also had like unto these,
23 and pomegranates. And there were ninety and six pomegranates [a] on the sides; all the pomegranates were an
24 hundred upon the network round about. And the captain
of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah
the second priest, and the three keepers of the [b] door:
25 and out of the city he took an [c] officer that was set over
the men of war; and seven men of them that saw the
king's face, which were found in the city; and the scribe
of the captain of the host, who mustered the people of the
land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that
26 were found in the midst of the city. And Nebuzaradan
the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to
27 the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the king of Babylon
smote them, and put them to death at Riblah in the land
of Hamath. So Judah was carried away captive out of
28 his land. [S] This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar

[a] Or, *on the outside* Heb. *towards the four winds.* [b] Heb. *threshold.* [c] Or, *eunuch*

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25. seven: in 2 Kings xxv. 19, 'five.'

28–30. After 27 the two texts diverge, to unite again at 31. In 2 Kings xxv. 22–26 we have a summary account of the fortunes of the remnant in Palestine down to the murder of Gedaliah and the flight into Egypt. It is abridged from Jer. xxxix. 11—xliii. 7. In our passage, which is absent in the LXX, we have an enumeration of the captives taken away in three deportations. We do not know from what source this was added, and the passage presents difficulties; but in view of these difficulties and the lowness of the numbers, its statements seem to rest on excellent authority. But we should probably read 'seventeenth' for 'seventh,' since the figures do not agree with those given as to the exile in 597 (2 Kings xxiv. 15, 16: on 13, 14 see Skinner's Commentary, p. 430). The first deportation will in that case fall at the beginning

carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand
Jews and three and twenty: in the eighteenth year of 29
Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem
eight hundred thirty and two persons: in the three and 30
twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven
hundred forty and five persons: all the persons were four
thousand and six hundred.

[E] [a] And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth 31
year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the
twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month,
that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of
his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah,
and brought him forth out of prison; and he spake kindly 32
to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings
that were with him in Babylon. And he changed his 33

[a] See 2 Kings xxv. 27-30.

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of the war with Zedekiah, and embrace the Jews of the districts outside Jerusalem, captured while the siege of the capital was in progress. We must further assume either that the captives taken after the capture of Jerusalem in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year are not included, which would be an unaccountable omission, or suppose that the author of this fragment followed a different reckoning, calling the eighteenth what is elsewhere called the nineteenth year; in which case the small number of the captives, eight hundred and thirty-two, taken from Jerusalem is very surprising. Of the third deportation we learn nothing from any other early source. It occurred some years after the destruction of Jerusalem. Several scholars combine the statement with that in Josephus (*Antiq.* X. ix. 7) that Nebuchadnezzar in the twenty-third year of his reign invaded Coele-Syria, then attacked the Ammonites and Moabites, and lastly Egypt from which he took to Babylon the Jews who were there. Some think that it was rather in connexion with the campaign against Moab and Ammon that he took away more of the Palestinian Jews.

31-34. Taken from 2 Kings xxv. 27-30.

31. five and twentieth. 2 Kings xxv. 27 has 'seven and twentieth.'

prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually
34 all the days of his life. And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

INTRODUCTION

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I. POSITION IN CANON, AND TITLE.

THE English Bible follows the Septuagint and Vulgate in placing the Book of Lamentations immediately after the Prophecies of Jeremiah. This position, which is due to the belief expressed in the Introduction to the former version, that Jeremiah was the author, is not accorded to it in the Hebrew Canon. In this it is placed, not in the second collection, which embraces the Prophets along with the earlier Historical Books, but in the third collection known as The Writings. That the latter is its original position is probable, since the LXX translation was made by a different hand from that to which we owe the translation of Jeremiah. The book bears the title *Eykah* (i. e. How) in the Hebrew Bible, from the word with which it opens; but the Jews often spoke of it under the title *Qinoth* (i.e. Lamentations), and it bears an equivalent title in the LXX and Vulgate.

II. LITERARY FORM.

The first four of the poems are acrostics. The first, second, and fourth each contain twenty-two verses, and each verse is introduced by its appropriate letter, beginning with the first letter of the alphabet and closing with the last. In the first and second chapters each verse contains three lines, while in chapter iv each contains two lines. In chap. iii there are sixty-six verses, each containing one line; but each letter of the alphabet is thrice repeated in successive groups of three verses. The fifth poem contains twenty-two verses, but is not alphabetic in structure. It has been suggested by C. J. Ball that originally it conformed to the other poems in this respect, and he has made suggestions for the restoration of the original. But such reconstructions necessarily involve so much departure from the present text that at the best their character must be very uncertain. The choice of the acrostic form for poems of this character is not quite easy to understand, since the necessity of conforming to an artificial scheme hampers the freedom of expression and fetters the natural development of the thought. It is possible that originally the alphabetic structure was chosen because some magical efficacy was attached to it. But later it became one among other literary types, as in the present book. Other acrostics are to be found in Pss. xxv, xxxiv, xxxvii, cxi, cxiii, cxix, cxlv, Prov. xxxi. 10–31. In all probability Pss. ix and x originally formed an alphabetic poem, and traces of the alphabetic arrangement are also to be found in Nahum i. One curious feature is presented by our book. In Lam. i the acrostic adopts the usual order of the Hebrew alphabet, Pe following Ayin, but in Lam. ii—iv Pe precedes Ayin. This order, which perhaps is to be found elsewhere, has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Some scholars suppose that the same order was originally followed in Lam. i, but this is improbable (see note on i. 15).

The most noteworthy literary feature of the book is the metrical structure of the first four chapters. These are written in Qina rhythm, which we have already learned to recognize as Jeremiah's favourite metre. The credit for establishing the existence of this metre belongs to Budde, though Lowth and other scholars had to some extent anticipated his results. The name Qina, or lamentation, rhythm was given to it by Budde because he considered that it was the metre in which dirges over the dead were uttered, and thus came to be used for elegies over national misfortunes. This metre was, however, by no means exclusively employed for lamentations, so that the term Qina rhythm is retained rather as a convenient than a strictly accurate designation. The characteristic feature of this rhythm is that it consists of long lines divided into two unequal parts, the second part being shorter than the first. The metre depended on accent rather than on quantity or the number of syllables. In Qina rhythm the first half of the line seems normally to have contained three accented syllables, the second two syllables. Budde lays down the law for elegies in the following sentence: 'These were uniformly composed in verses of two members, the length of the first of which stands to that of the second in the proportion of 3 : 2, giving rise to a peculiar limping rhythm, in which the second member as it were dies away and expires' (Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii, p. 5). Probably we ought to recognize that there was a greater freedom and irregularity in the execution than would be congenial to Western taste, so that while the recognition of Qina rhythm is valuable for purposes of Textual Criticism, some caution should be exercised in emending the text into too strict conformity with a rigid metrical scheme. For a fuller discussion of the questions of Hebrew metre in general the student may consult Cobb's *A Criticism of Systems of Hebrew Metre*, together with Budde's article in Hastings's *Dictionary* mentioned above and the relevant section in Cornill's Introduction to the Old Testament; and with special reference to *Lamentations*, the Introduction to Löhr's Commentary, where the metrical theory of Sievers is discussed. It may be added that Condamin, in a very suggestive article entitled 'Symmetrical Repetitions in *Lamentations* Chapters I and II', in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. vi (1906), has shown that in the first two chapters as a rule a word or expression which occurs in the first verse is repeated in the last verse, similarly in the second and last but one, in the third and last but two, and so on. This requires a little transposition in Lam. i, but that constitutes no serious objection. It is true that the repetitions are in several instances of very common expressions, but in other instances this is not so.

III. AUTHORSHIP AND DATE.

IN the English version the book is attributed to Jeremiah. In the LXX the title is simply 'Lamentations', i.e. no author's name is given in the LXX, which thus accords with the Hebrew. But it contains an introductory note which seems to rest upon the Hebrew original, and which is reproduced with some variation in the Vulgate. This note runs as follows: 'And it came to pass after Israel was carried away captive and Jerusalem was made desolate that Jeremiah sat weeping, and he lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and he said.' It has been held by some scholars that the author of Chronicles attributed the Lamentations to Jeremiah. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 we read in connexion with the death of Josiah: 'And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations, unto this day; and they made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.' The reference, however, can hardly be to our book. This contains only one verse, namely iv. 20, which could be interpreted as having reference to Josiah. Really it refers to Zedekiah, but the possibility of misinterpretation cannot be denied. It is, nevertheless, highly improbable. The chronicler is with good reason believed to have belonged to one of the temple choirs, and he could hardly have supposed that compositions sung in commemoration of the fall of Jerusalem could have had reference to the death of Josiah; and on the face of it the statement that the lamentations for that king are written in the Lamentations cannot refer to our book. We have accordingly no external evidence earlier than that of the LXX translation for the traditional view, and this is too late to bear any weight. It is possible, however, that the author of Lam. iii attributed one or more of the poems to Jeremiah.

We must accordingly rely on internal evidence alone for an answer to the problems of authorship and date.

The book itself puts forward no claim to authorship. At first sight the traditional view seems very plausible. Of course the popular view that Jeremiah was likely to have written the Lamentations because his temperament was such as to find congenial expression in such compositions, largely depends for its validity on an estimate of Jeremiah derived from the book itself, an estimate reflected in our word 'Jeremiad'. But this is to argue in a circle, and tacitly to assume the very point which needs to be proved. Still there are indications in Jeremiah's undoubted work of a temperament akin to that which finds utterance in our book (cf. Jer. ix. 1, xiii. 17, xiv. 17). Yet it is only a very imperfect parallel with the real Jeremiah that the author or authors of the Lamentations present to us. The sterner elements in his character can barely be discerned in our book, his capacity for moral indignation, his vehement denunciation, his clear-sighted certainty of approaching judgement, his conviction that no earthly power could bring political salvation to the apostate people.

Leaving aside the question as to the similarity of temperament, there is no doubt considerable affinity between our book and the Book of Jeremiah, alike in language and ideas. But this does not go beyond what would be natural in those who had been influenced by Jeremiah. Moreover, the points of contact are considerably diminished in importance when we remember how large is the non-Jeremianic element in the Book of Jeremiah itself.

Seeing then that the arguments in support of the Jeremianic authorship dwindle to a late tradition, whose origin is readily explained by the desire to father anonymous literature on some conspicuous personality, Jeremiah being the obvious if not the only possible candidate for such distinction, and to affinities in temperament, expression and ideas which cannot bear the weight of an argument for identity in authorship, we should be compelled, were there no arguments on the other side, to leave the question of Jeremiah's authorship in suspense. But there are cogent arguments which seem to exclude the traditional theory. In the first place, we may well inquire why, if Jeremiah was the author, his name was not mentioned in the Hebrew title of the book. And indeed we may inquire further why these poems were not included in our Book of Jeremiah. Their character would not make such an inclusion inappropriate, in view of the somewhat miscellaneous nature of the contents and the presence of much in it which is not the work of Jeremiah at all. Or, if for any reason it was desired to keep it distinct, why should it not have been appended in the Hebrew Canon to the Book of Jeremiah, as in the Septuagint and other versions?

These general considerations are reinforced by those derived from a study of the book. While there is a general agreement in standpoint there is difference in detail. In iv. 17 the author includes himself with those who had expected help from Egypt, whereas Jeremiah emphatically declared that such a hope was entirely vain. In iv. 20 he speaks of Zedekiah in language very different from that which would have been used by Jeremiah. Nor can we reasonably suppose that Jeremiah could have said 'Her prophets find no vision from Yahweh'. Some of the other instances which have been alleged to prove the incompatibility of our book with the traditional authorship cannot be pressed. So far as the language and style of the book are concerned there are points of contact with Jeremiah, as mentioned above; there is also a marked difference, as was demonstrated at an earlier period by Naegelsbach and at a later time exhaustively proved by Löhr. On this it may suffice to quote the judgement of a great Hebraist who was singularly free from any love of novelty for its own sake. A. B. Davidson says: 'The whole style of these poems, though exquisitely beautiful and touching, and studded with the thoughts of the great prophet, is absolutely different to anything we find in the long roll of Jeremiah's great work. It is too artificial, too much studied, too elaborately worked out' (*Book by Book*,

p. 231). The case against Jeremiah's authorship is strengthened by the proof of dependence on Ezekiel and affinity with later writers. So far as this test goes we have to distinguish different groups within our book. Lam. ii and iv exhibit dependence on Ezekiel, Lam. i and v show points of contact with the Second Isaiah, and Lam. iii with Psalms of a late date. That Jeremiah should have borrowed from Ezekiel, even if he had known the younger prophet's writings, is very improbable, since we have no evidence of any such influence in his undoubted work. And the argument from literary parallelism, so far as it goes, favours a later date than that of Jeremiah for the composition of Lam. i, iii, and v.

This is corroborated by a consideration of the circumstances which are reflected in the poems. It is rather difficult in any case to find a suitable occasion in which Jeremiah could have composed the poems; but leaving this aside, the conditions which they seem to presuppose are in some instances apparently later than Jeremiah's time. The book closes with an appeal to Yahweh, which implies that the desolation of Judah has continued for a long time; and we could not reasonably regard this passage as written in Jeremiah's lifetime, quite apart from the inconsistency with Jeremiah's settled convictions as to the length of the exile which it involves. Moreover, the speaker is living apparently in Palestine a long time after the destruction of Jerusalem. We may say then that looking at the book as a whole the differences in diction constitute a very strong argument against the Jeremianic authorship, even if we could admit that he was in a position to write the poems and that he would have been likely to fetter the expression of his grief by an artificial alphabetic scheme. Looking at the poems in detail, the probable dependence on Ezekiel makes his authorship of Lam. ii and iv improbable, and it is also excluded by the inconsistencies with Jeremiah's standpoint already mentioned. Affinities with II Isaiah make this improbable for Lam. i and v, while the situation presupposed in the latter seems to fall outside the limits of Jeremiah's lifetime. Lam. iii appears to belong to the post-exilic period.

If then no part of the book is the work of Jeremiah, the question remains whether it is the work of more than one poet. Assuming that the variation in the alphabetic order which distinguishes Lam. i from Lam. ii and iv is original, it is not unlikely that it may be by a different author. Lam. ii and iv are commonly assigned to the same author on the ground of their literary affinity, their mutually complementary character, and the identical situation out of which they apparently spring. Lam. v is probably a good deal later than Lam. ii and iv, and deals with different conditions altogether, and is probably by another author. The absence of an alphabetic scheme favours the view that it was not written by the authors of Lam. i—iv. It is also probable, on account of its late date and the form which the acrostic takes, its literary quality and the character of its subject-matter, that the author of Lam. iii is responsible for none of the other poems. That the work of four different poets should be included in this book has really nothing strange about it. It is quite likely that many poets wrote elegies on the destruction of Jerusalem and the wretchedness of the people in the period which followed.

The date of the poems cannot be fixed within very close limits. Lam. ii and iv are probably the oldest. They were written, we may reasonably suppose, by one who had witnessed the horrors of Judah's last agony, since they bear all the marks of composition by an eye-witness. The dependence on Ezekiel suggests that they were written by an exile in Babylonia; their date need not be later than 580 B.C. Lam. v is considerably later, probably still within the exilic period but towards the close of it. Lam. i may perhaps belong to the same period. Lam. iii is much later. Löhr suggests 325 B.C. as an approximate date, while Budde assigns it to the third century in the pre-

Maccabean period (similarly Cheyne). It should be added that in two important articles, that in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* by Cheyne and that in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* by C. J. Ball, a post-exilic date has recently been assigned for the whole book. The main ground on which this conclusion rests is the literary relationship between our book and late exilic and post-exilic compositions. In detail, however, the two writers differ considerably, and while their studies are valuable for their collection of parallel passages these do not outweigh in the present writer's opinion the impression that Lam. ii and iv at least were written by an eye-witness, or the probability that Lam. v is earlier than the close of the exile. It may be added that J. A. Selbie in his admirable article in Hastings's Dictionary also considers a post-exilic date plausible.

IV. SELECTED LITERATURE.

Of the older literature it may suffice to mention the Commentary by Calvin, of later Commentaries those by Thenius, Neumann, Ewald, Gerlach, Naegelsbach, Payne Smith, Streane (Cambridge Bible), Cheyne (Pulpit Commentary), Oettli, Budde, and Löhr. Adeney contributes the volume on *Canticles and Lamentations* to the Expositor's Bible. Greenup has published a Commentary on Lam. i, and also a translation of the Targum on the Book of Lamentations. The articles in the Dictionaries of the Bible and Encyclopaedias may be consulted, together with the Introductions to the Old Testament mentioned in the literature on Jeremiah. The articles by Löhr in Stade's *Zeitschrift* are of special value.

NOTE.—It has not seemed necessary to add any symbols indicative of authorship, or to prefix analyses of the poems to the notes, in view of the absence of any systematic development of the themes dealt with in the different poems.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! 1
How is she become as a widow!

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i. 1–22. The First Elegy.

The first elegy falls into two main divisions: (a) 1–11, (b) 12–22. In the former the poet is the speaker, in the latter Jerusalem. The city, however, is introduced as the speaker in the closing lines of 9 and 11; while in 17 the prophet interrupts her utterance, referring to the city in the third person. The theme receives no strict development, the author returns again and again to the same thought, and the poem is characterized by a certain poverty in vocabulary. In spite of some fine verses it falls below the second and fourth elegies in poetic value, and it is conventional in form and expression. It seems to have been written in Palestine; its date may be towards the close of the exile. Löhr singles out as specially characteristic of its theological standpoint, the emphasis on sin, not simply the rebellions of earlier generations but of the writer's own time, and the desire for revenge.

An excellent translation is given by Cheyne in the Introduction to *The Book of Psalms* in the *Parchment Library.*

i. 1, 2. As a parallel to this very fine passage Cheyne aptly quotes the splendid opening of Swinburne's *Mater Dolorosa.*

1. The verse, as is usual, falls into three lines:

'How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people!
She is become as a widow, that was great among the nations,
Princess among the provinces, she is become tributary!'

How. The second and fourth elegies open in the same way, and similarly Isaiah's lament on the corruption of Jerusalem (Isa. i. 21), a passage which may have been in the writer's mind; cf. also Jer. ix. 18, xlviii. 17; Zeph. ii. 15; Ezek. xxvi. 17; Isa. xiv. 4, 12; 2 Sam. i. 25. The exclamation was apparently commonly used as an introduction to dirges over the dead.

sit solitary. The city once thronged with people, now sits all deserted, as Isaiah had described her approaching fate in the pathetic imagery of Isa. iii. 26.

as a widow. The widowhood of Zion is spoken of in Isa. liv. 4, and the same prophet replies to Babylon's arrogant boast,

She that was great among the nations, *and* princess
among the provinces,
How is she become tributary!
2 She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her
cheeks;

'I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children,' with the announcement that 'the loss of children and widowhood' shall befall her in one day (Isa. xlvii. 8, 9). The poet does not, however, call Zion a widow, nor does he mean to suggest that she is bereaved of Yahweh her husband (Isa. liv. 5). She is compared to a widow; it is her forlorn and defenceless condition, exposed to insult and oppression, her penury and loneliness, which the metaphor calls up before us.

princess among the provinces. This is probably better than Budde's rendering, 'princess over the provinces,' since it matches 'great among the nations.' The term 'provinces' is used in 1 Kings xx. 14-19 in the phrase 'the young men of the princes of the provinces,' where it seems to mean the various districts into which the kingdom was divided. Apart from this passage it is found only in the later literature, with reference generally to the Persian satrapies. Its meaning here is not quite clear. Löhr suggests, with a reference to the Targums, that it may mean 'city,' which would be more appropritae.

tributary: better **a bond-servant.** See Judges i. 30, where the R.V. marg. gives 'subject to taskwork.'

2. The city which in 1 was simply compared to a widow, is now represented as a woman. Zion weeps bitterly for her desperate state, as Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, for her exiled children (Jer. xxxi. 15). But while Rachel refused to be comforted, those who should have consoled Zion had treacherously deserted her. These were her 'lovers' (cf. 19) and 'friends,' i.e. the nations which were in alliance with her, especially the other Palestinian peoples (cf. Jer. xxvii. 3), and Egypt (iv. 17, Jer. xxxvii. 5 ff.). For the exultation of Edom over the downfall of Jerusalem see note on iv. 21, 22; for the hostility of Ammon Jer. xl. 14, Ezek. xxv. 3-7.

in the night: cf. Ps. xxx. 5. The point is not that her sorrow is so great that she weeps not by day only but even in the night which should be dedicated to rest. The night is rather the season when pain is most acutely felt and the hours seem interminable. And similarly the sense of bereavement and ruin is more overwhelming when the sunshine has passed away and the stir of the day has given place to the stillness of the night. There is nothing to blunt the edge of sorrow or divert attention from it; withdrawn

Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her:
All her friends have dealt treacherously with her,
They are become her enemies.
Judah is gone into [a] captivity because of affliction, and 3
because of great servitude;
She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest:
All her persecutors overtook her within the straits.
The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the 4
[b] solemn assembly;

[a] †Or, *exile* [b] †Or, *appointed feast*

---

from all companionship, shut in alone with her grief, Zion the desolate relieves her emotion in passionate tears.

All her friends . . . enemies. This should be printed as one line; the division is correctly indicated, the second part of the line begins with 'They.'

3. From the city the poet turns to the people. The Hebrew is ambiguous; the preposition rendered 'because of' means 'from,' and it may be used here in a local or a causal sense. If the former, the meaning is that Judah has gone into captivity in Babylonia away from the affliction and servitude she suffered in her own land, and this is supported by the fact that the verb rendered 'is gone into captivity' all but invariably bears this sense. But it is unlikely that the poet would wish to leave the impression that captivity was an amelioration of the people's lot, and even if it were actually so it would be contrary to his purpose to lighten his picture by such a touch. We should accordingly abide by the R.V. rendering, substituting the margin 'exile' for 'captivity,' and take the reference to be to voluntary exile on the part of those who were left behind in Judah, but found the Babylonian yoke too intolerable and left Judah to escape it; cf. Jer. xl. 11, xlii, xliii. The verb is used in a similar sense in Ezek. xii. 3. But even among the peoples that were free from Babylon she found no settled home, and her weakness exposed her to oppression, her persecutors took advantage of the straits into which she was driven.

servitude. From Isa. xiv. 3 we learn that the Jews in Babylonia had to render forced labour to their rulers, and apparently this was so with those who were permitted to remain in Palestine.

among the heathen: in an unclean land, among those who had no respect for her religion and regarded Yahweh as a God too weak to save His people and His sanctuary from Babylon.

4. The ways which lead to Zion, once crowded with those who came up to the feasts, now mourn because they are deserted;

All her gates are desolate, her priests do sigh:
Her virgins are afflicted, and she herself is in bitterness.
5 Her adversaries are become the head, her enemies prosper;
For the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions:
Her young children are gone into captivity before the adversary.
6 And from the daughter of Zion all her [a] majesty is departed:

[a] Or, *beauty*

---

the priests sigh, for their occupation and livelihood have disappeared; the virgins who had their appointed part in the cultus (Judges xxi. 21, Ps. lxviii. 25, Jer. xxxi. 13) are afflicted; while Zion herself broods in bitterness. The passage has a historical importance, since it does not favour the view that throughout the exile the cultus was continued on the Temple site, though it may have done so for some time after the destruction of the city (see note on Jer. xli. 5).

5. the head. There is perhaps a reference to Deut. xxviii. 13, 44.

her transgressions. The thought that Zion's calamities were due to her sin recurs in 8, 18, 20, 22; but the writer does not indicate more precisely of what sins she had been guilty.

Her young children . . . adversary. The reference may be to the deportation of the Jews by the Babylonians, the young children being singled out because the privations and fatigue of the march would press on them with special severity. But the author wrote apparently in the latter part of the exile, and the burden of his lamentation is the sad condition of city and people at the time, rather than the horrors of the siege and the miseries of the deportation, though the latter are of course mentioned. It is possible that the reference may be rather to the fact that parents were driven by poverty to sell their children into slavery.

6. her majesty: her wealth and splendour; so that even the princes had become faint from famine in the siege, and in this exhausted condition are driven by the foe into exile. The specific allusion in the third line is sometimes taken to be to the flight of Zedekiah and the men of war from Jerusalem, when the Babylonians entered it. But in view of the fact that this poem was probably not written by an eye-witness of the fall of Jerusalem, it is more likely that the line has a more general reference, though it might be urged that, according to Jer. lii. 10, 'all the princes of

Her princes are become like harts that find no pasture,
And they are gone without strength before the pursuer.
Jerusalem remembereth in the days of her affliction and 7
of her [a] miseries
All her pleasant things that were from the days of old:
When her people fell into the hand of the adversary,
and none did help her,
The adversaries saw her, they did mock at her [b] desolations.

[a] †Or, *wanderings* [b] Heb. *ceasings.*

Judah' were put to death by Nebuchadnezzar in Riblah, and therefore were not taken to Babylon.

like harts. The LXX and Vulg. took the word to mean 'like rams;' the difference is only one of pointing, and many modern commentators accept this. Budde's objection that rams are not hunted is forcible, but 'the pursuer' need not be so narrowly interpreted, while 'rams' is more suitable than 'harts' as a designation of princes, and the word is in fact constantly used in this or a similar sense.

7. The verse is too long. It ought to contain three lines, but it has four. The irregularity is less obvious to the English reader, since the R.V. has printed 1 and 2 in four lines, though they are really three-lined verses (see notes). Probably the second line should be deleted as a marginal gloss which has been mistakenly inserted, and we should render in the text, 'Jerusalem remembereth the days of her affliction and wanderings. When her people fell,' &c. The origin of the gloss is obscure; it may have been attached to 'her majesty' in 6, or it may have been intended to bring out the bitterness of her fate by contrast with her former glory. When the gloss is removed, the first line has still an abnormal verse-division; but we ought probably to recognize that the order of the two parts of the line was occasionally inverted, the shorter being placed first. Budde secures regularity by striking out the rare word rendered 'and of her miseries,' as perhaps a repetition of the very similar word rendered 'of her pleasant things;' though it might be due to the influence of iii. 19, 'Remember mine affliction and my misery.'

miseries. The word occurs besides only in iii. 19 and Isa. lviii. 7. Its sense is uncertain; probably it means 'restlessness,' 'wandering.'

desolations. The word occurs here only. The A.V. rendering 'sabbaths,' which follows the Vulgate, is rightly set aside by the

8 Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she [a]is become as an unclean thing:
All that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness:
Yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.
9 Her filthiness was in her skirts; she remembered not her latter end;
Therefore is she come down wonderfully; she hath no comforter:
Behold, O LORD, my affliction; for the enemy hath magnified himself.
10 The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things:

[a] Or, *is removed*

R.V., which gives the general sense; 'downfall' would perhaps be beter.

8. With a realism, uncongenial to our Western taste, the poet describes in this verse and the following the pitiful humiliation of Jerusalem, and the scorn which its exposure has brought upon her, among those who had formerly honoured her.

9. According to the present text the first two lines are metrically irregular. Budde makes the ingenious suggestion that two words should be transposed from 8 and inserted after 'skirts,' and that 'she hath no comforter,' which occurs several times in the poem, should be struck out as an insertion designed to fill a gap. The lines would then run,

'Her filthiness was in her skirts, she is become as an unclean thing:
She remembered not her latter end, therefore is she come down wonderfully.'

This yields a text more satisfactory both in metre and sense; for the want of connexion between the two halves of the first line in the present text is very noticeable. For 'she remembered not her latter end' cf. Isa. xlvii. 7.

As in 11, the last line is an appeal by the city to Yahweh; which prepares for the transition to direct speech in 12.

10. The enemy has greedily seized all Zion's 'pleasant things,' the special reference in this context being to the Temple treasures. The sense of the Temple's sanctity was deeply outraged by the intrusion of the heathen into it. The feeling was probably inten-

For she hath seen that the heathen are entered into her
sanctuary,
Concerning whom thou didst command that they should
not enter into thy congregation.
All her people sigh, they seek bread; 11
They have given their pleasant things for meat to refresh
the soul:
See, O Lord, and behold; for I am become vile.
Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? 12

---

sified in the later period, the profanation by Antiochus Epiphanes, the entrance of Pompey into the Holy of Holies, being resented with the utmost horror and bitterness. In Pss. lxxiv and lxxix we perhaps have reflected the emotion stirred by an earlier profanation in the Persian period, to which some would also refer Isa. lxiii. 7—lxiv. 12. In the first century of our era there was a Greek inscription warning Gentiles, on penalty of death, not to pass beyond the barrier which marked the limits of the court of the Gentiles. This inscription has been discovered in recent times. The third line, with its reference to Deut. xxiii. 3, though in a generalized form (cf. Ezek. xliv. 9), brings out that it is a Divine, not merely a human prohibition, which the heathen have transgressed. Löhr suspects that this line was originally a marginal gloss which has taken the place of the original third line. But if a marginal gloss was inserted in the text, we should have expected the verse to consist of four lines, as is the case with 7, rather than that a line should be struck out to make room for it. Bickell, followed by Cheyne, reads in the first line 'Zion spreadeth forth her hands, because of her pleasant things,' the gesture in that case expressing distress.

11. Oettli is probably right in thinking that the special reference in this verse is to the conditions after the fall of Jerusalem. Such valuables as they had been able to save from the disaster they had been compelled to part with to buy bread. So in v. 4 the complaint is made that they have to purchase the water and the wood which once they had owned.

meat: literally 'bread,' i. e. food.

12. The second half of the poem begins at this point. Zion is now the speaker, except in 17.

The text of the first line is probably corrupt. The rendering in E.V. is very dubious; the Hebrew is literally 'Not to you, all ye that pass by.' The LXX apparently took the negative *lo'* as the particle *lu'*, 'would that,' though it is possible that the transla-

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me,
[a] Wherewith the LORD hath afflicted *me* in the day of his fierce anger.
13 From on high hath he sent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth against them:
He hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me back;

[a] Or, *Whom the* LORD *hath afflicted*

---

tor read *ōy*, 'alas.' The verse must have begun with *Lamed*, but this letter is written small in the Hebrew text, which also may point to textual corruption. Several suggestions have been made for the restoration of the text, but none inspires any great confidence. Budde reads 'Oh, all ye that pass by, look on me and see;' Löhr 'Therefore, all ye that pass by, look and see.'

all ye that pass by. The traveller, as he pauses before the ruins of Zion, is asked whether in all his wanderings he has seen a sight so pathetic, a grief so bitter, so absorbing; all the more bitter that it is her own God who has smitten her in His hot anger.

13. Yahweh has sent from heaven a fire into Zion's bones; the reference is not, of course, to the fortresses, as the hard bony parts of the structure; the metaphor implies that the Divine judgement has entered like a flame her inmost being, a fever whose racking pains ended in death. The figure is borrowed apparently from Jer. xx. 9: cf. Ps. cii. 3, Job xxx. 30.

it prevaileth against them. The word is not very appropriate; the verb may bear the same sense as the cognate form in Aramaic, to chastise. We might adopt this, and with a slight change read 'and chastened me.' The Vulgate read the Hebrew in this way.

spread a net for my feet. The metaphor is not uncommon in the Psalms to describe the plots devised by the writer's enemies for their ruin. The Psalmists do not represent God as spreading a net for the feet. In Ezek. xii. 13 (cf. xvii. 20) Yahweh says with reference to Zedekiah, 'My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare;' similarly in Hos. vii. 12, 'When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them:' cf. Jer. l. 24. The most striking development of the metaphor is in Bildad's graphic description of the snares and terrors which beset the wicked on every side (Job xviii. 8–11).

he hath turned me back. We should rather have expected the line to be completed by some such clause as, 'and taken me

He hath made me desolate and faint all the day.
The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand; 14
They are knit together, they are come up upon my neck;
he hath made my strength to [a] fail:
The Lord hath delivered me into their hands, [b] against
whom I am not able to stand.

[a] Heb. *stumble.*

[b] Or, *from whom I am not able to rise up*

---

in its toils.' If the poet intended to continue the metaphor of the net, he has not done so in a very felicitous way: snares are set to entrap, not to turn back; for the latter the figure of a barrier would have been more appropriate. The two parts of the verse should presumably be regarded as mutually independent.

14. This is a very difficult verse. The verb rendered 'is bound' occurs nowhere else, and its existence is dubious. The substitution of another consonant (*ne'ĕqad* for *nisqad*, so Cheyne) would give the sense 'is bound;' the verb occurs in Gen. xxii. 9 only. Or we might read *niqshar* (so Ball). Written with a *Shin* instead of a *Sin* (the difference being one simply of a diacritical point), the verb means 'to watch.' Since the word rendered 'yoke' may be so pointed as to mean 'upon,' the LXX naturally took the Hebrew to mean 'Watch is kept over my transgressions.' We should then have to suppose either that the word rendered 'by his hand' is to be regarded as a fragment of the second part of the line, or connect it with the following word, rendering 'by his hand are they twisted together.' The second line will then consist of 'they are come up . . . fail.' Since this is unduly short, Budde proposes to insert the word for 'yoke' (reading *'ālu 'ōl 'al*), which is all the easier that the two consonants of which it is composed already occur twice, and then continues in the next clause with a plural verb. 'They have come up as a yoke upon my neck; they have made my strength to fail.' This restoration of the first two lines does not give the most satisfactory sense, but it is perhaps the nearest approximation to the original that has so far been proposed. The meaning will be that Yahweh watches over Zion's transgressions, twining them together into a rope of many strands, which is laid like a yoke on her neck, and has exhausted her strength.

The third line gives a good sense, but the Hebrew would run more smoothly if, with Budde, we read 'their hand' instead of 'the hands of,' rendering 'Yahweh hath delivered me into their hand, I am not able to rise up.'

15 The Lord hath set at nought all my mighty men in the midst of me;
He hath called a solemn assembly against me to crush my young men:
The Lord hath trodden as in a winepress the virgin daughter of Judah.
16 For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water;
Because the comforter that should refresh my soul is far from me:
My children are desolate, because the enemy hath prevailed.

---

15. The heroes of Zion are powerless against the might of Babylon; the foe assembles against her warriors as if to celebrate a sacrificial banquet (cf. Zeph. i. 7, 8, Jer. xlvi. 10, Ezek. xxxix. 17–20, Isa. xxxiv. 6) to which the ruddy wine will not be wanting, for Yahweh has trodden human grapes in His winepress, the wine is the blood of Judah. The metaphor of the last line is powerfully worked out in the brilliant, if morally repulsive, description of Yahweh's return from His triumph over Edom in Isa. lxiii. 1–6: cf. Joel iii. 13, and the imitative passages Rev. xiv. 18–20, xix. 15.

virgin daughter of Judah: not Judah's virgin daughter, but Judah conceived as a young virgin, the genitive being one of apposition. The designation is based on Isaiah's 'virgin daughter of Zion.' But it is not equivalent to it; Zion is the speaker, but she refers to Judah in the third person, and means the population of the whole kingdom. Bickell identifies the two, and supposes that here the poet speaks in his own person and refers to Zion in the third person. Since he does this in 17, Bickell infers that 16 and 17 should be transposed, so that this line should stand in immediate connexion with 17. This would secure the same order of the alphabet as in ii–iv, according to which Pe precedes Ayin. But this is to be rejected not only because Zion and Judah are not to be identified, but because it would spoil the present symmetrical division of Zion's speech into two equal halves, 12–16 and 18–22.

16. On metrical grounds the repetition of 'mine eye' must be regarded as a mistake, due to dittography. The second and third lines consist mainly of echoes of earlier verses.

these things: i. e. those enumerated in 13–15.

Zion spreadeth forth her hands; there is none to comfort her; 17
The LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, that they that are round about him should be his adversaries:
Jerusalem is among them as an unclean thing.
The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: 18
Hear, I pray you, all ye peoples, and behold my sorrow:
My virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.
I called for my lovers, *but* they deceived me: 19

---

17. The poet speaks in his own person. This verse also has points of contact with earlier parts of the poem. Zion spreads out her hands in entreaty to a pitiless world; Yahweh has decreed that Jacob's neighbours should be his foes; they look on Jerusalem with loathing, as a man would shrink from the ceremonially unclean. In the later period the name Jacob (ii. 2, 3) was used for the nation with greater frequency and without the sinister suggestions of trickiness and self-seeking that once attached to it. For the hostility of the surrounding peoples see note on 2 and Jer. xii. 7–17 (with the notes).

18. Zion resumes her utterance with a confession that Yahweh is righteous in thus afflicting her; it is the due punishment for her rebellion: cf. 5, 8, 14, 20, 22. She turns to the nations, as before to the wayfarer (12), appealing to their compassion in spite of their former lack of sympathy; she cannot believe that they would withhold their pity if they but considered the bitterness of her bereavement.

My virgins and my young men. This order is found only here and in ii. 21, Amos viii. 13.

are gone into captivity. The reference is probably to the deportation to Babylon, though possibly to the selling of youths and maidens into foreign slavery: see note on 5.

19. the poet touches again (cf. 2, 8) the faithlessness of Judah's allies; when her crisis came they betrayed her trust. Then he passes on to the religious and secular leaders of the people, who perished of hunger, while vainly seeking food to bring back their exhausted vitality. At the end of the verse the LXX adds 'and found it not.' Metrical considerations forbid its addition, unless something is removed to take its place. Dyserinck and Budde substitute it for 'to refresh their souls.' It is true that this expression occurs in 11, 16, but this poem is marked by numerous

My priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city,
While they sought them meat to refresh their souls.
20 Behold, O LORD; for I am in distress; my bowels are troubled;
Mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled:
Abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.
21 They have heard that I sigh; there is none to comfort me;
All mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that thou hast done it:
Thou wilt bring the day that thou hast proclaimed, and they shall be like unto me.

---

repetitions, and that their search was unsuccessful is sufficiently indicated by the previous line. Ball reads 'For they sought food to restore life, and found it not.'

20. From the description of her calamities Zion turns to Yahweh in prayer, though the prayer itself contains fresh mention of her troubles. Ball reads 'my inwards burn' instead of 'For I have grievously rebelled,' which is more suitable to the context. The third line presents some difficulty. The general sense is clear: the sword bereaves outside the city; death, i. e. the pestilence (see note on Jer. xv. 2), rages within. But 'there is as death' is strange. The omission of a single consonant gives the reading 'at home there is death,' which is quite satisfactory except that it is not quite easy to account for the origin of the present text. It is accepted by several scholars, and is probably the best way out of the difficulty.

21. The text is in some disorder. At the beginning we should probably read, with the omission of one consonant, 'Hear how I sigh,' the words being addressed to Yahweh as at the beginning of 20. The text has been assimilated to the second line. The second and third lines as at present arranged are metrically irregular. We can best overcome the difficulty by transposing (with Löhr) the latter part of the second line and the former part of the third,

'All mine enemies have heard of my trouble, thou hast brought the day that thou didst proclaim;
They are glad that thou hast done it, let them be like unto me.'

The 'day' is that of Zion's downfall foretold by the prophets.

Let all their wickedness come before thee; 22
And do unto them, as thou hast done unto me for all
my transgressions:
For my sighs are many, and my heart is faint.

How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with 2
a cloud in his anger!
He hath cast down from heaven unto the earth the
beauty of Israel,

---

22. The prayer for vengeance on her exulting foes is more fully developed in this verse and supported by a moral motive. The spirit is one of retaliation, but it is given a more decorous expression by the plea that they also are guilty of wickedness, which merits an equal punishment with the rebellion of Zion. Ball reads at the beginning of the verse 'Let the time of their calamity come.'

ii. 1–22. The Second Elegy.

This poem is of higher poetical value than the first elegy; it is written with a much more vivid sense of the catastrophe, apparently by one who had lived through it and seen with his own eyes the pitiful scenes and the horrors he describes. It is less made up of generalities, and deals far more with concrete realities. Its affinities with Ezekiel suggest a date a few years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and favour the view that the author was himself an exile.

For a spirited rendering of Lam. ii and iv see G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, vol. ii.

ii. 1. How: see note on i. 1.

covered . . . with a cloud. This is probably the correct rendering of the verb, which occurs nowhere else in the O. T. The dense cloud which covers Zion is a symbol of the gloom which has settled upon her, and the shrouding of her glory from the gaze of the world. Cheyne reads 'put to shame.'

daughter of Zion: see note on i. 15. It occurs six times in this poem; 'daughter of Judah' twice; 'daughter of Jerusalem' twice.

the beauty of Israel. This may be an expression for the glory of Israel, its exalted position; or it may designate some concrete object, either the Temple (Isa. lxiv. 11) or Jerusalem. Exalted to heaven, it had been thrust down from that proud pre-eminence. Yet thrust down to earth, not to Sheol; its ruin is not irretrievable.

And hath not remembered his footstool in the day of
his anger.
2 The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of
Jacob, and hath not pitied;
He hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of
the daughter of Judah;
He hath brought them down to the ground:
He hath profaned the kingdom and the princes thereof.
3 He hath cut off in fierce anger [a] all the horn of Israel;

[a] Or, *every horn*

---

his footstool. Obviously this cannot be, as in Isa. lxvi. 1, the whole earth, but either the ark as in 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, or the Temple as Ezek. xliii. 7 and probably Ps. xcix. 5, cxxxii. 7. The latter is much the more likely, especially as it is questionable if the ark was in existence when Jerusalem was captured.

2. There is a metrical irregularity, which is relieved, if not completely removed, by Löhr's rearrangement of the second and third lines,

> 'He hath thrown down, brought down to the ground the strong holds of the daughters of Judah;
> He hath profaned in his wrath the king and the princes thereof.'

The change of 'kingdom' into 'king,' accepted also by Bickell, is not for metrical reasons, but follows the LXX, Syriac, and Arabic; cf. 9, and Isa. xliii. 28 (R.V. margin), 'will profane the holy princes.'

The verse describes first the unsparing devastation of the homesteads and pastures in the country districts (this being the special sense borne by 'habitations'), then the overthrow of the fortresses, and finally the desecration of king and princes. The divinity that 'doth hedge a king,' which made an outrage on 'the Lord's anointed' something of a sacrilege to antique thought, was rudely stripped away, and the secondary sanctity, which was communicated to princes of the blood (cf. Isa. xliii. 28 as above), naturally disappeared with the primary. On the origin of this conception in primitive superstition, Dr. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, Part I, 'The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings' (1911), may be consulted with advantage.

3. The horn is often in the O.T. the symbol of strength: the meaning is that all the might of Israel has been cut off. The right hand which formerly Yahweh had stretched out in defence of His people, He has drawn back, leaving them dependent on themselves alone in presence of the enemy. Thus having in His wrath

He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy:
And he hath burned up Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.
He hath bent his bow like an enemy, he hath stood with his right hand as an adversary, 4
And hath slain all that were pleasant to the eye:
[a] In the tent of the daughter of Zion he hath poured out his fury like fire.
The Lord is become as an enemy, he hath swallowed up Israel; 5
He hath swallowed up all her palaces, he hath destroyed his strong holds:
And he hath multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.
And he hath violently taken away his [b] tabernacle, as if it were of a garden; 6

[a] Or, *On* Or, *booth* Or, *hedge*

---

cut off their strength, and then withdrawn His own protection, they are at the mercy of the foe. Not content with depriving them of all power of defence, He has taken the offensive against them, and burned Jacob as with a devouring fire.

4. This verse also is only imperfectly preserved. The second half of the first line is too long; Löhr is probably right in thinking that 'with his right hand' has been mistakenly inserted from 3. The second line has been wrongly printed in R.V. It should run:

> 'And hath slain all that were pleasant to the eye in the tent of the daughter of Zion.'

The third line is unfortunately incomplete, the second half having been lost. Yahweh is in this verse represented as an archer (cf. the powerful description in Job xvi. 13) ranging Himself against His people and slaying the youths and maidens of Zion. Another restoration (by Cheyne) may be seen in *Enc. Bib.* 2698.

5. mourning and lamentation. Streane reproduces the assonance in the Hebrew by rendering 'groaning and moaning;' Cheyne renders 'moaning and bemoaning.'

6. This verse is difficult. The first line in the Hebrew is repre-

He hath destroyed his place of assembly:

---

sented by two lines in the R.V. The reference to 'a garden' is barely intelligible. The rendering 'as if it were of a garden' suggests that the tabernacle of Yahweh has been removed with as little compunction as if it were a temporary booth in a garden. But the Hebrew is more naturally rendered 'as a garden,' and this yields no satisfactory sense. The LXX reads 'as a vine,' but this is no better. Since both words begin with the same consonant, Löhr may be right in thinking that the Hebrew and the LXX are expansions of the same abbreviation. De Hoop Scheffer reads, with the addition of a single consonant, 'as a thief' (*gannāb* for *gan*), and this has been accepted by Dyserinck and Budde. In that case we should adopt the margin 'hedge' for 'tabernacle,' and explain that Yahweh has broken down the hedge round Zion as ruthlessly as a thief would break down a fence which protected property he desired to rob. If this was the original text it was perhaps intentionally altered, both in the Hebrew and the LXX, because the comparison seemed offensive. It is better than the Heb. and LXX, but it leaves something to be desired in lucidity, and the context favours the rendering 'tabernacle' rather than 'hedge,' since it is with the Temple that the poet is now concerned. Accordingly we must resign ourselves to recognizing that the text is corrupt. The general sense is fortunately clear. Cheyne gives a suggested restoration of 6–8 in *Enc. Bib.* 2698.

place of assembly. This sense is required by the context. The word is the same as that rendered 'solemn assembly' in the next line, and though the meaning 'place of assembly' is attested by Ps. lxxiv. 8, it is suspicious that the word should be used in two senses in successive lines. Budde thinks that the original text may have read 'his vineyard' (*karmō*), which was perhaps intentionally altered by the same hand to which we owe 'as a garden.'

But 'his vineyard' would surely have seemed quite unobjectionable to him; it would suit the present text quite as well as that which De Hoop Scheffer substitutes. If, as is probable, neither is correct, we may dismiss the emendation 'his vineyard.' The context requires a designation of the Temple. The present writer is inclined to think that 'his sanctuary' (*miqdāshō* instead of *mo'ădō*) should be read. The corruption was facilitated by the fact that the next word (*shikkaḥ*) began with *sh*, and by the occurrence of *mo'ēd* in the next line. It is true that this word recurs in 7, but so also does *mo'ed*, i.e. three times in two verses, and the use of the same word in the same sense in consecutive verses is less objectionable than the use of the same word in different senses in consecutive lines.

The LORD hath caused [a] solemn assembly and sabbath
to be forgotten in Zion,
And hath despised in the indignation of his anger the
king and the priest.
The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his 7
sanctuary,
He hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls
of her palaces:

[a] †Or, *appointed feast*

---

the king and the priest. The king is mentioned here, as the context requires and the coupling with the priest suggests, in virtue of his official relation to the cultus.

7. The second line is difficult and probably corrupt. This verse, like the preceding, is occupied with the Temple; a reference to palaces is out of place. If the term is taken to mean certain parts of the Temple, such a meaning occurs nowhere else, and since 'sanctuary' is a masculine noun, the feminine 'her palaces is hard to account for. Elsewhere the expression 'to give up into the hand of' has persons, not things, for its object. Several scholars hold that the text needs to be altered. Dyserinck thinks some such word as 'his dwelling' should be substituted for 'her palaces.' Budde suggests very cleverly that we should emend it into 'his ark of the covenant' (*'ărōn bᵉrīthō* for *'armᵉnōtheyhā*), and strike out 'the walls of' as a mistaken insertion from the next verse. This suggestion, like the preceding, is open to the objection that we should expect the object to be persons, not things. Even if we waive this, as in this context we well may, it remains questionable if a mention of the ark is to be expected here (see notes on 1). Cheyne reads for 'the walls of her palaces,' 'all her precious things;' similarly in 8 'to destroy the precious things of Zion.' Löhr simply leaves a blank in his translation.

The poet compares the noise made in the Temple by the Babylonian soldiers to that made on 'the day of a solemn assembly,' an allusion, all the more significant that it is quite incidental, to the orgiastic character of the cultus in the pre-exilic period. It is also clear that the poet was himself familiar with the Temple-worship before the destruction of Jerusalem, a fact which corroborates what we should otherwise infer from the poem, that he was an eyewitness of its siege and fall. The description may be illustrated from Ps. lxxiv. 3-7, even though this probably refers to a later calamity, especially from verse 4, 'Thine adversaries have roared in the midst of thine assembly.'

They have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as
in the day of a solemn assembly
8 The LORD hath purposed to destroy the wall of the
daughter of Zion;
He hath stretched out the line, he hath not withdrawn
his hand from [a] destroying:
But he hath made the rampart and wall to lament;
they languish together.
9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed
and broken her bars:
Her king and her princes are among the nations where
the law is not;

---

[a] Heb. *swallowing up.*

8. The poet passes on from the Temple to the walls and gates of the city and its most prominent inhabitants. The walls and gates are specially mentioned, because while they remained intact the city kept its foes at bay, and when the city was captured they were broken down (2 Kings xxv. 10 = Jer. lii. 14) as a precaution against future rebellion (cf. Ezra iv. 12–16). Although Jerusalem was reduced to the extremities of famine (12, 19, 20, iv. 3, 4, 9, 10, 2 Kings xxv. 3 = Jer. lii. 6), the city was not actually starved into surrender, but 'a breach was made in the city' (2 Kings xxv. 4 = Jer. lii. 7).

stretched out the line. This metaphor is employed elsewhere not only for building or restoration (Zech. i. 16) but for pulling down as here: cf. Amos vii. 7–9; 2 Kings xxi. 13, 'And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab;' Isa. xxxiv. 11, 'he shall stretch over it the line of confusion and the plummet of emptiness.' The work of destruction will be carefully planned and thoroughly executed.

not withdrawn his hand. God's hand was withdrawn from the defence of His people (3); it is stretched out to destroy the city.

For the vivid personification in the third line cf. i. 4, Jer. xiv. 2.

9. In the first line, 'destroyed' and 'broken' are variants, one of which must be deleted on metrical grounds. The latter is used in Amos i. 5, Jer. li. 30, and may be either retained or struck out on that ground. Bickell and Budde strike it out, but read 'her bars are destroyed,' so that Yahweh ceases to be the subject, as in the rest of the verse.

where the law is not. If this rendering is correct, the mean-

Yea, her prophets find no vision from the LORD.
The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, 10
they keep silence;
They have cast up dust upon their heads; they have
girded themselves with sackcloth:
The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the
ground.
Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, 11

---

ing is that the king and princes are in a heathen land where the Law cannot be fulfilled because the land is unclean. But it is more likely that we should take the words as an independent sentence, and explain 'law' as the ritual direction given by the priests (Jer. xviii. 18, see the note; Ezek. vii. 26, Mal. ii. 7). The verse then expresses the same idea with reference to three classes, rulers, priests, and prophets, that they are precluded from exercising their proper duties. It is the function of kings and princes to rule; but obviously when they and their people are exiles in a foreign land this has become impossible; the duty of the priest is to give *torah* or ritual instruction, but with the cessation of the cultus there is no demand for *torah*; the prophet is such because he receives 'vision' from Yahweh and proclaims to the people what he has thus learnt, but though there are prophets in the captivity Yahweh vouchsafes them no vision, their vocation has gone. This last statement is somewhat surprising from a poet who was apparently acquainted with Ezekiel's prophecies and had been influenced by them. But presumably he is thinking here, as in 14, of the prophets whom Jeremiah and Ezekiel alike condemned and whom the fall of Jerusalem had discredited. We should render the two lines:

'Her king and her princes are among the nations; there is no
priestly direction;
Also her prophets find not a vision from Yahweh.'

10. While king and princes govern no longer, while priests have no occupation, and prophets see no vision, the elders sit in dumb despair on the ground and no longer give counsel in the gate. They have sprinkled dust on their head (2 Sam. xiii. 19, Job ii. 2, Ezek. xxvii. 30) and girded themselves with sackcloth, both expressions of mourning. The virgins in deep dejection bow their heads to the ground.

11. The poet, in a moving passage, now describes his own anguish at the suffering of his people in the siege, especially at the pitiful spectacle of the little children swooning from hunger

My liver is poured upon the earth, for the [a] destruction of the daughter of my people;
Because the young children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city.
12 They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine?
When they swoon as the wounded in the streets of the city,
When their soul is poured out into their mothers' bosom.
13 What shall I [b] testify unto thee? what shall I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem?

[a] Or, *breach* [b] Or, *take to witness for thee*

---

in the streets, vainly begging for food which the heart-broken mothers have no power to give. His pity for the children comes out again in 20, iv. 3, 4, 10.

My liver: mentioned like the bowels as a seat of emotion. The statement that it is poured on the ground is strangely expressed, but it is to be compared with the similar phrase 'Pour out thine heart' in 19: cf. Ps. lxii. 8.

12. corn and wine. Budde omits 'and wine,' no doubt correctly. The metre requires the omission; the request for wine is not in itself probable, and elsewhere the word for wine used here (*yāyin*) is coupled with that for 'bread;' a different word for wine (*tīrōsh*) being combined with 'corn.' In the LXX, where the Hebrew speaks of some one as eating, the translator often adds that he drank. Here a similar addition has been made, while the Syriac, by a still more thoughtless addition, reads 'corn and wine and oil.'

their soul is poured out: i.e. they lapse into unconsciousness, either of swoon or death; the former seems to be intended here. A pathetic touch is added to the picture by the last words: the mother strains to her breast the exhausted body of her child as it faints with hunger.

13. The poet tries to bethink himself of some parallel catastrophe; if he could discover one, Zion might take some comfort from the fact that her disaster was not unexampled. Alas, it is immeasurable as the sea.

testify unto thee. Of what can he assure Zion? But we should probably correct the text and, with Krochmal and Meinhold, read 'compare' (*e'ĕrōk*) for 'testify,' as in Isa. xl. 18.

What shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For thy breach is great like the sea: who can heal thee?
Thy prophets have seen visions for thee of vanity and 14
foolishness;
And they have not discovered thine iniquity, to bring
again thy captivity:
But have seen for thee [a] burdens of vanity and [b] causes
of banishment.
All that pass by clap their hands at thee; 15
They hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, *saying*:

[a] †Or, *oracles* [b] Or, *things to draw thee aside*

---

14. The poet complains of the prophets, who have prophesied falsely and covered up the sin of Jerusalem. If they had only done their duty, he implies, the captivity might have been averted. It is remarkable that he ignores Jeremiah's pessimistic verdict on the conduct of the people, and the obstinate self-complacency on which his message made but little impression. Nor could Jeremiah be himself the writer of this passage. He judged the situation quite differently. True, he denounced the prophets in scathing terms. But priests and people were held guilty by him, and he would have refused to excuse them on the score that the prophets had not done their duty.

foolishness. The word bears rather the sense of 'whitewash:' the prophets have palliated the conduct of the people, represented it in altogether too favourable a light.

to bring again thy captivity: see note on Jer. xxix. 14. Here the term apparently means 'to avert thy captivity;' the A.V., 'to turn away thy captivity,' hits the sense better.

causes of banishment. The word occurs here only, but the derivation fixes its meaning as 'banishment.' The meaning cannot be that the prophets foresaw the expulsion of Judah, for they strenuously denied it, but that the attitude which they encouraged by their oracles inevitably led to exile. The visions they saw were in this sense 'causes of banishment.'

15. The mockery of the travellers (i. 12) as they pause to contemplate the ruins of the once famous city. Probably the gestures in this verse are intended to express scorn and astonishment rather than exultation: see Job xxvii. 23, 'Men shall clap their hands at

Is this the city that men called The perfection of beauty,
The joy of the whole earth?
16 All thine enemies have opened their mouth wide against thee;
They hiss and gnash the teeth; they say, We have swallowed her up;
Certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen it.
17 The LORD hath done that which he devised;
He hath [a] fulfilled his word that he commanded in the days of old;
He hath thrown down, and hath not pitied:
And he hath caused the enemy to rejoice over thee,

[a] Or, *finished*

---

him, And shall hiss him out of his place;' Zeph. ii. 15, 'every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand;' Jer. xviii. 16, 2 Kings xix. 21, Ps. xxii. 7.

that men called. This should be struck out on account of the metre, probably also 'the city.' The line gains greatly in force by the omissions.

The perfection of beauty: cf. Ps. l. 2, Ezek. xvi. 14 (and with reference to Tyre), xxvii. 4, xxviii. 12.

The joy of the whole earth: so Ps. xlviii. 2, cf. Isa. lx. 15.

16. While the traveller, who has no animosity against Jerusalem, views the ruins with amazement and contempt, the gestures of her enemies express their bitter hate and vindictive joy at her overthrow. The first line is imitated in iii. 46.

opened their mouth wide: cf. Ps. xxii. 13, xxxv. 21. Löhr points out that our poem has several points of contact with Ps. xxxv. Thus 'gnash the teeth' in this verse and Ps. xxxv. 16; 'we have swallowed her up,' so Ps. xxxv. 25; 'we have seen it,' cf. Ps. xxxv. 21.

17. The judgement which has come on Jerusalem is only what Yahweh had long meditated and foretold. Lev. xxvi. 14 ff., Deut. xxviii. 15 ff. are often said to be in the poet's mind; the latter may well be, the former is on critical grounds more uncertain. But it would be a mistake to exclude the threats uttered by the prophets. 'The days of old' need not refer to remote antiquity; the prophets of the eighth century would be reckoned to that period.

He hath exalted the horn of thine adversaries.
Their heart cried unto the Lord : 18
O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night ;
Give thyself no respite ; let not the apple of thine eye cease.
Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the 19 watches ;

---

exalted the horn : see note on 3; cf. Ps. lxxxix. 17, 24, xcii. 10, cxii. 9, cxlviii. 14 ; 1 Sam. ii. 1, 10.

18. It is generally recognized that the beginning of the verse is corrupt. The present text begins with the statement that 'their heart cried' (whose heart is not said), and then the wall of Jerusalem is bidden weep, cry out, and intercede for the life of her young children. The arrangement in the E.V., according to which the statement is detached from the exhortation, to some extent disguises the difficulty, which is felt more acutely when it is seen that the first line goes down to 'Zion.' But a statement is out of place here, and the reference to the wall is also strange. The verse should begin with exhortation. Ewald read the imperative 'cry' for the perfect 'cried' (*tsaʿăqi* for *tsāʿaq*), and this emendation has been generally accepted, though opinions differ as to the precise restoration of the rest of the phrase, e. g. 'cry out with thy heart,' 'cry out with thy voice.' For 'O wall of the daughter of Zion' several scholars read 'O virgin daughter of Zion,' supposing that the present text has originated under the influence of 8. This is probably the correct solution, though other suggestions have been made to restore an original in closer conformity with the present text. Cheyne reads 'Cry out because of Jerusalem's disgrace, Zion's insult.'

let tears run down : cf. Jer. xiv. 17.

apple of thine eye : cf. Deut. xxxii. 10, Ps. xvii. 8 for this designation of the pupil of the eye, though in these passages it is mentioned as an object of peculiar care.

19. This verse contains a line too many. The fourth line should be struck out as a later addition. The gloss was occasioned by the feeling that the peril by which the lives of Zion's children was endangered needed to be stated. It rested, however, on the mistaken view that the children were those of tender age, whose pitiful condition has come before us in 11, 12. But presumably they are the inhabitants as a whole, and the situation reflected is that after the fall of the city, not during the privations of the siege.

Pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord:
Lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children,
That faint for hunger at the top of every street.
20 See, O LORD, and behold, to whom thou hast done thus!
Shall the women eat their fruit, the children that are dandled in the hands?
Shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

The line is based on 12, iv. 1; cf. Isa. l. 20, Nah. iii. 10. Ball thinks that 'for the life of thy young children' was originally 'for what he hath done unto thee.'

at the beginning of the watches: at the beginning of each of the three watches into which the night was at this time divided. As the watchman utters his cry, the sleeper is aroused, called back from the oblivion of slumber to the bitter realities of life.

Pour out thine heart: cf. 11. The hands were uplifted in prayer, which was often uttered in a loud voice.

20. Zion, in obedience to the poet's behest, utters her prayer to God, or rather a remonstrance with Him for the desolation He has wrought. The questions are rhetorical, they do not plead that the horrors enumerated shall not happen; they have happened already; is God to be indifferent to them? For the first cf. the hideous story of the siege of Samaria, 2 Kings vi. 25–30. That matters would come to this extremity in the siege is foretold in Deut. xxviii. 53, cf. Jer. xix. 9, Lev. xxvi. 29. The closing words at the end of the second line are added to heighten the pitifulness of the description by a reference to the helpless infancy of the victims, and the fond affection which in happier days had been lavished upon them by those who are now driven by desperate hunger to so unnatural a deed. To this outrage on natural sanctities the poet adds an outrage on the sanctities of religion. Presumably the reference is to the butchery of priests and prophets in the Temple by the Babylonians after the capture of the city. The place of the priest was in the Temple; the prophets may have taken refuge in it, believing (cf. Rev. xi. 1, 2) that it at least could not be taken by the enemy.

The youth and the old man lie on the ground in the 21
streets;
My virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword:
Thou hast slain them in the day of thine anger; thou
hast slaughtered, *and* not pitied.
Thou hast called, as in the day of a solemn assembly, 22
[a] my terrors on every side,
And there was none that escaped or remained in the day
of the LORD's anger:
Those that I have dandled and brought up hath mine
enemy consumed.

I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his **3**
wrath.

[a] See Jer. vi. 25.

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21. Further description of the butchery, which spared neither age nor sex.

22. The R.V. means that Yahweh has summoned all the terrors of war, plague, and famine to effect the ruin of Jerusalem; He has called them as if to a festival, a festival of carnage from which none has escaped. But it is also possible, following the LXX, to take the word rendered 'terrors' to mean 'hamlets.' The point is in that case that the inhabitants of the surrounding districts have been summoned to Jerusalem, and thus their fate also has been sealed, so that none have survived (so Ewald and Löhr). But the parallel with the Jeremianic phrase 'Terror round about' favours the R.V. rendering, and, as Budde points out, Zion in the last line simply laments the loss of her own inhabitants.

iii. 1–66. THE THIRD ELEGY.

This poem is generally regarded, and with justice, as below the level of Lam. i in poetic value, and still more below that of ii and iv. It is of the same length as i and ii, but whereas in these the first of each triad of lines begins with the letter required by the alphabetic scheme, in this each line of the triad begins with that letter; moreover the lines of the triad are less closely knit together by community of subject-matter. The exigencies of this artificial scheme have been to some extent responsible for the literary inferiority of the composition.

2 He hath led me and caused me to walk in darkness [a]and not in light.

[a] Or, *without light*

The question that arouses the keenest discussion is that of the identity of the speaker. That he is an individual sufferer is held by several, especially Budde and now Löhr; that he speaks in the name of the community, or that the community itself is the speaker, is held by a considerable number of recent writers. Budde's advocacy of the individual identification is very interesting in view of his strong vindication of the national interpretation of the Servant of Yahweh. Some of the features in the poem speak strongly for it, e.g. 1 and 27; also the change to the plural in 40–47, where the metaphors are more suitable to the experiences of a people than in the rest of the chapter. The representation of the people as a man, in view of its representation elsewhere as feminine, is also improbable. The inclusion in this book, which is concerned with the miseries of the nation, no doubt constitutes a presumption that here also the nation is the subject. But from this we can argue only as to the interpretation placed on the poems by the compiler, not as to that intended by its author. And even so far as the compiler is concerned, if he regarded Jeremiah as the author of the Lamentations, he might well have included a poem which he took to be a description of Jeremiah's personal experiences; the community of authorship rather than of subject justifying its combination with elegies on the nation.

The question has passed into a new stage with Löhr's more recent investigations in Stade's *Zeitschrift* for 1904. He thinks that the poem reflects inconsistent situations (1–24 and 52–66; also 48–51 and 52–66). He points out that 6 occurs as a quotation in Ps. cxliii, but there it is in its original form, here it has been altered to suit the acrostic scheme. He infers that 1–24 contains substantially the Psalm from which the author of Ps. cxliii quoted, but as we have it, it has been turned into an acrostic by the author of our chapter. 52–66 contains a second Psalm, in which also the speaker is an individual, and which has similarly been turned by the author into an acrostic. 25–50 contains the author's own contribution, and most clearly betrays his intention to represent the speaker as undertaking the rôle of Jeremiah. This theory is persuasively stated by Löhr, and it is by no means improbable that, as several scholars have thought, the poet speaks in the character of Jeremiah. It is also the case that the composition does seem not to hang together throughout. Still the explanation offered is in any case somewhat speculative, and the theory as to origin a little difficult to accept. Moreover, the present writer cannot admit all the references to Jeremiah pointed

Surely against me he turneth his hand again and again all the day. 3

My flesh and my skin hath he [a] made old; he hath broken my bones. 4

He hath builded against me, and compassed me with [b] gall and travail. 5

[c] He hath made me to dwell in dark places, as those that have been long dead. 6

[a] †Or, *worn out* [b] See Deut. xxix. 18. [c] See Ps. cxliii. 3.

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out by Löhr to be really such. But he has rightly called attention to phenomena which deserve consideration.

iii. 1. The speaker points to himself as one who has 'seen,' i. e. experienced, 'affliction,' in that he has been smitten by Yahweh in His anger; cf. for the expression Isa. x. 5, though the reference here is wider, Ps. lxxxix. 32. It is noteworthy that Yahweh is unnamed, but precarious to infer that the author wrote this elegy as a continuation of Lam. ii. 'I am the man' would not form a good continuation to ii. 22, where Zion speaks as a woman. Cf. for a similar reference to God without naming Him Job iii. 20 (see note). This continues throughout 1-16, where the author is describing God's hard dealings; also in the prayer 17-21, where we have the second personal pronoun, but no direct address to Yahweh. Only when from the depressing recital of the miseries inflicted by Him and the pitiful entreaty, the writer begins to speak of His goodness and mercy, does he abandon the pronoun for the name itself.

4. From the general statements of 1-3, the author now passes to a detailed description of his miseries under many figures, frequently of a conventional character, drawn especially from Job and the Psalms.

made old: or 'worn away.' The constant tribulations have worn him to a shadow.

broken my bones: cf. Isa. xxxviii. 13, Ps. li. 8, Jer. l. 17.

5. The strange combination 'gall and travail' suggests that the text is in disorder. Since the word rendered 'gall' also means head,' it is natural that several should take it so here and emend the text. The simplest suggestion is that of Praetorius, 'and compassed my head with travail.' But this does not yield a felicitous sense, nor are other suggestions more fortunate. Schleusner's emendation 'gall and wormwood' would avoid the incongruous combination in the present text.

6. This verse recurs in Ps. cxliii. 3. The speaker compares his

7 He hath fenced me about, that I cannot go forth; he hath made my chain heavy.

8 Yea, when I cry and call for help, he shutteth out my prayer.

9 He hath fenced up my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked

10 He is unto me as a bear lying in wait, as a lion in secret places.

11 He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces; he hath made me desolate.

12 He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow

13 He hath caused the [a] shafts of his quiver to enter into my reins.

[a] Heb. *sons*.

---

wretched lot to that of the dead who dwell in the gloomy recesses of Sheol. It is not clear whether we should render as R.V. or substitute 'those that are for ever dead.' In the latter case the point seems to be the hopelessness of any return to a happier state; in the former case the point might be that the dead of the primaeval era dwelt in exceptionally dark regions of Sheol. A reference to the exceptionally wicked antediluvians might be intended. Ps. lxxxviii. 4–6, 10–12 may be compared.

7. Cf. Job xix. 8. This chapter seems to have been in the writer's mind: for 5 cf. Job xix. 12; for 8 cf. Job xix. 7. Here a double metaphor is used to describe his loss of freedom; his way is blocked, and his heavy chain fetters his movements.

8. The speaker complains, as Job does (xix. 7, xxx. 20), that God refuses to hear his prayer.

9. The meaning seems to be that God has piled blocks of hewn stone in his way, and thus driven him into by-paths which lead in a wrong direction.

10. For a similar combination of lion and bear cf. Hos. xiii. 8. Possibly this verse carries on the figure of 9; driven into the winding by-ways, he falls into the clutches of beasts of prey.

11. For the first clause cf. 9; the second perhaps takes up the metaphor of 10.

12, 13. Job xvi. 12, 13 seems to be in the author's mind; cf. also vi. 4.

I am become a derision to all my people; and their song all the day. 14

He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath sated me with wormwood. 15

He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes. 16

And thou hast [a] removed my soul far off from peace; I forgat prosperity. 17

And I said, My strength is perished, and mine expectation from the LORD. 18

Remember mine affliction and my [b] misery, the wormwood and the gall. 19

My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is bowed down within me. 20

[a] Or, *cast off* [b] Or, *wandering* Or, *outcast state*

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14. The verse recalls Jer. xx. 7, 8: cf. Job xii. 4, xxx. 1, 9; Ps. lxix. 11, 12. A variant reading for 'my people' is 'peoples.' The choice between them largely depends on the view taken as the question whether the speaker is an individual, or the nation.

15. Cf. Job ix. 18, Jer. ix. 15.

16. Cf. Prov. xx. 17. Whether the meaning is that gravel is mixed with his bread, or that he is fed with gravel instead of bread (cf. Matt. vii. 9), is not clear. The correctness of the text has been doubted. Cheyne suggests 'And I girded sackcloth on my flesh; I rolled myself in ashes' (*Enc. Bib.* 2699).

17. thou hast removed. The second person is strange in this description, since up to this point the third person has been used. The rendering 'my soul is rejected' is possible, but in view of 31 and Ps. lxxxviii. 14 improbable. The LXX reads 'he has removed,' and this is probably to be accepted. Ball suggests 'And he cast off my soul for ever.'

19, 20. Now the speaker appeals to God to remember his affliction and wandering (see note on i. 7). It would be more regular if 20 continued the appeal, or if 19 did not contain a prayer. Löhr adopts the former alternative, rendering 20 'Remember, yea remember, that bowed down in me is my soul.' Budde adopts the latter, rendering 19, with a change in punctuation, 'The memory of my affliction and wandering is wormwood and gall.'

21 This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

22 *It is of* the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed,
because his compassions fail not.
23 They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.
24 The LORD is my portion, saith my soul: therefore will
I hope in him.

25 The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the
soul that seeketh him.
26 It is good that a man should hope and quietly wait for
the salvation of the LORD.
27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

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21. This. The structure favours the reference to what has preceded; but it is more suitable to refer it to the beautiful description which follows, in spite of the awkwardness involved in breaking into the alphabetic group of three verses to which 21 belongs. His hope is inspired by remembrance of God's unfailing mercy.

22, 23. There are some metrical irregularities in these verses. For the first person we should probably read the third (so Targum and Syriac), and omit 'that,' 'because,' rendering 'The Lord's mercies are not spent, his compassions fail not.' Since the first part of 23 is too short, we might transfer 'his compassions' to this verse 'New every morning are his compassions;' reading 'they fail not' in 22.

24. Cf. Ps. xvi. 5, lxxiii. 26, cxix. 57, cxlii. 5.

25–27. Each verse of this group begins with the Hebrew word rendered 'good,' which strikes its key-note. First we have an expression of faith in God's goodness (25), which encourages a man to wait patiently for God's deliverance even in the midst of suffering (26), which he is better enabled to bear because he recognizes the moral value of the discipline (27). Löhr aptly compares Rom. v. 3–5.

26. The Hebrew is difficult, but the R.V. gives what must be the general sense intended. Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 7, xl. 4, lxii. 1, Jer. xvii. 7.

27. The inference of J. D. Michaelis that the verse was written by a young man has no cogency. It might even better be argued that it is the judgement of a man no longer young, looking back from the vantage-ground of long experience, and recognizing the value of the discipline through which he passed in his youth. Cf.

[a] Let him sit alone and keep silence, because he hath 28
laid it upon him.
Let him put his mouth in the dust; if so be there may 29
be hope.
Let him give his cheek to him that smiteth him; let him 30
be filled full with reproach.

For the Lord will not cast off for ever. 31
For though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion 32
according to the multitude of his mercies
For he doth not afflict [b] willingly, nor grieve the 33
children of men.

[a] Or, *He sitteth alone &c.* (vv. 28–30)

[b] Heb. *from his heart.*

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the fine exposition of the thought in Heb. xii. 7–11. The reading 'from his youth' found in several Hebrew MSS. and in some Versions is probably due to a scribe's blunder. Cheyne, on the ground that our present text introduces an idea which is not further utilized, reads with comparatively slight change, 'It is good that he bear mutely the rebuke of Yahweh' (*Enc. Bib.* 2699).

28–30. In view of the considerations brought forward in 25–27, let the man who is suffering at God's hand bear it with resignation and self-abasement, and even endure buffeting and contumely from his fellows. For 28 cf. i. 1, ii. 10, Jer. xv. 17.

29. There is no parallel in the Old Testament to the first clause; the attitude of prostration with the face on the ground is a typically Oriental expression of complete and silent submission. The phrase 'to lick the dust' imports an abject element into the surrender.

30. Cf. Isa. l. 6, in a soliloquy by the Servant of Yahweh; Matt. v. 39; also Job xvi. 10.

31–33. The dumb submission enjoined in 28–30 is recommended by the assurance that Yahweh's rejection of the sufferer will not be permanent (31), since His mercy will ultimately incline Him to compassion (32), for it is from no delight in inflicting pain that He chastises the children of men (33).

31. Cf. Ps. xxx. 5 (see R.V. marg.), lxxvii. 7–10, ciii. 9, Isa. lvii. 16, Mic. vii. 18. Several scholars think that on metrical grounds the verse is too short. The easiest suggestion is to insert 'man' as the object, but 'children of men' would be less bald. Ball suggests 'his soul,' cf his emendation of 17.

34 To crush under foot all the prisoners of the earth,
35 To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High,
36 To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord [a] approveth not.

37 Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?
38 Out of the mouth of the Most High cometh there not evil and good?
39 Wherefore doth a living man complain, [b] a man for the punishment of his sins?

---

[a] Heb. *seeth not.*
[b] Or, *a man that is in his sins*

34–36. The passage is difficult. The R.V. rendering is accepted by several, but others consider that 'approveth' is an illegitimate translation. The alteration of one consonant would yield this sense. It is better to retain the strict sense of the word (see margin), and take the passage as interrogative, 'Doth not the LORD see?' The exigencies of the acrostic scheme are probably responsible for the infelicity of the Hebrew. The evils which Yahweh marks with disapproval are, first, the oppression of captives by their conquerors, or prisoners by those in whose power they are; and secondly, the withholding or perversion of justice.

37–39. Yahweh has cognizance of all the wrong wrought on the earth (34–36), for nothing is done by man save by His permission (37); both calamity and prosperity follow His behest (38); let man refrain from complaint, his suffering is recompence for his sin (39).

37. Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 9; the first part of the verse refers here to man, though the expression is more suitably used of God.

38. Cf. Amos iii. 6, Isa. xlv. 7. The Most High, the Supreme Lord of the universe, controls the whole course of history; evil cannot be wrought, apart from His permission. The Satan cannot touch Job till God gives him leave. The speculative problem created for Theism by such a statement is not before the writer's mind.

39. This sentence is difficult. Some take it to contain question and answer, 'Of what should a living man complain? Each (should complain) of his sins.' Probably, however, the R.V. rendering is preferable; the meaning being that man should not

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the 40
LORD.
Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the 41
heavens.
We have transgressed and have rebelled; thou hast 42
not pardoned.

Thou hast [a] covered with anger and pursued us; thou 43
hast slain, thou hast not pitied.
Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that *our* prayer 44
should not pass through.

[a] †Or, *covered* thyself

---

indulge in murmurs at his misfortunes, they are the penalty for his sin. The word rendered 'the punishment of his sins' more commonly, it is true, means 'sin,' and this favours the former interpretation. But since the two previous verses of the group contain questions without answers, it is more symmetrical to adopt the same here. The point of the adjective 'living' is not clear. It may be, so long as a man has life, he has no reason for complaint; his punishment falls short of the death which is the due meed of his sins. (For an emendation by Cheyne see *Enc. Bib.* 2699.)

40–42. The recognition that suffering is due to sin (39) should lead to self-examination and repentance (40), followed by prayer (41) and penitent confession (42).

41. Lifting of hands was a common gesture in ancient prayer. But the formal exercise, to be effective, must carry the heart with it. Perhaps the thought is, let us offer our heart on our hands, i.e. present the whole heart to God in prayer.

42. The last clause constitutes a transition to the next group.

43. With this verse a description of the miseries of the people begins, which continues to 47.

covered. According to the R.V. text, the meaning is that God has overwhelmed His people with anger and pursued them. But this can hardly be the meaning; we should have expected the order of the verbs to be inverted, and the following verse suggests that we should render, as in the margin, 'covered *thyself*.' He had clothed Himself in His fiery indignation and pursued His people, slaying without mercy.

44. That God dwelt in clouds and darkness is a thought which

45 Thou hast made us *as* the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the peoples.

46 All our enemies have opened their mouth wide against us.

47 Fear and the pit are come upon us, [a] devastation and destruction.

48 Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water, for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 Mine eye poureth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission,

50 Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven.

51 Mine eye affecteth my soul, because of all the daughters of my city.

[a] Or, *tumult*

---

frequently recurs in Hebrew poetry, where it is used with the finest effects. Here the thought is that God has thus wrapped Himself in cloud that the prayer of His people may not penetrate to Him.

45. Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 13. The meaning is that Israel is reduced to a position of the utmost humiliation in the sight of the nations; cf. 14.

46. Taken from ii. 16.

47. Fear and the pit: see on Jer. xlviii. 43. There is a slighter assonance in the Hebrew in the latter part of the verse, which is imitated in the R.V.

48. Cf. i. 16, Jer. xiii. 17; a still closer parallel to the first clause is found in Ps. cxix. 136, for the last clause see ii. 11. This verse is connected with the next group by the reference to 'mine eye.'

49-51. Löhr rightly points out that 50 would stand better at the end of the group than 51, and suggests that the original order may have been 51, 49, 50.

49. For the incessant weeping cf. Jer. ix. 1.

51. The sense is obscurely expressed. The first clause is generally taken to mean that the constant weeping has inflamed his eyes and is causing him physical pain, 'my soul' meaning simply 'myself.' The remainder of the verse has been very variously interpreted; the sense is probably that the sufferings of the women of Jerusalem have caused him to weep thus incessantly.

They have chased me sore like a bird, that are mine 52
enemies without cause.
They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and have cast 53
a stone upon me.
Waters flowed over mine head; I said, I am cut off. 54

I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the lowest 55
dungeon.
Thou heardest my voice; hide not thine ear at my 56
breathing, at my cry.
Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: 57
thou saidst, Fear not.

O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou 58
hast redeemed my life.
O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong; judge thou my 59
cause.

---

52. The speaker turns now to his own afflictions, of which he gives a metaphorical description. That the language is figurative is clear in 52, but we should probably take the reference to imprisonment in the dungeon in the same way. If the poet had Jeremiah's experiences in mind he has not kept closely to them; 54 in particular had no counterpart in the experience described in Jer. xxxviii. 6–13, but is excluded by the fact that there was no water in his dungeon. A stone may have been placed over the mouth of the pit in which he was confined, but we have no reference to it in the story. The words may mean, however, 'have cast stones at me,' and this would be quite inconsistent with any reference in the clause to Jeremiah's experience. Ball, however, reads for 53ᵇ 'They brought me down to Abaddon,' an attractive but not quite easy emendation. The figures of pursuit by hunters, of confinement in dungeons, of waters going over the head, are quite common especially in the Psalms.

55–57. The speaker looks back at his prayer in the dungeon and God's response. Verse 56ᵇ, 'hide not . . . cry,' seems to contain the gist of the prayer uttered in the dungeon.

58. The speaker is still looking back on an experience which has come to an end. Yahweh has acted as his advocate in the law-court, and secured a verdict for His client.

59–66. Now the speaker passes from the former situation

60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their devices against me.

61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O Lord, and all their devices against me;
62 The lips of those that rose up against me, and their imagination against me all the day.
63 Behold thou their sitting down, and their rising up I am their song.

64 Thou wilt render unto them a recompence, O Lord, according to the work of their hands.
65 Thou wilt give them [a] hardness of heart, thy curse unto them.
66 Thou wilt pursue them in anger, and destroy them from under the heavens of the Lord.

4 How is the gold become dim! *how* is the most pure gold changed!

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[a] †Or, *blindness* Heb. *covering.*

---

which he has been describing, and invokes Yahweh's help against the enemies from whom he is at present suffering.

62. lips: i.e. utterances. It is governed by 'thou hast heard' in 61.

63. sitting down and **rising up:** cf. Ps. cxxxix. 2; it is a comprehensive expression for a man's life in general. For the last clause cf. 14.

64. Cf. Ps. xxviii. 4.

65. thy curse unto them: to be taken as an imprecation, not as dependent on 'give.'

iv. 1–22. The Fourth Elegy.

This chapter is an acrostic poem, which adopts the same alphabetic order as ii and iii. It is, however, shorter than the first three poems, since each alphabetic group consists of two lines only instead of three. It is very closely related in content to the second elegy, and probably proceeds from the same author. Points of contact between the two poems are the emphasis on the responsibility of the religious leaders for the catastrophe, and the compassion felt for the sufferings of the children. Each poem

The stones of the sanctuary are poured out at the top
of every street.
The precious sons of Zion, [a] comparable to fine gold, 2

[a] Heb. *that may be weighed against.*

---

seems to have been written by an eye-witness. There is also a similarity in the arrangement, according to which both fall into two main sections. The differences even more strongly suggest unity of authorship, since the two poems are apparently designed to be mutually complementary. For the date see the Introduction to ii.

The poem opens with a contrast between the former glory of Zion's sons and their present wretchedness. This is illustrated by the unnatural cruelty of the mothers to their children, and the miserable condition of those once surrounded with luxury. Their sin must be greater than Sodom's, since their lingering agony is so much worse than Sodom's swift overthrow. The poet then describes once more the extremities to which famine has reduced the nobles, and the unnatural deeds it has caused the mothers to commit. So terrible, so unexpected a punishment, is due to the sins of priests and prophets, who are as unclean as lepers, through the shedding of innocent blood. Then the poet speaks of the vain hopes of help from Egypt; and passes on to describe the closing period of the siege, and the capture of the king. He closes with a bitter reference to Edom's exultation, predicting that her turn will come, while the sin of Zion is now fully expiated.

iv. 1. The fine gold and the stones are not to be taken literally, but, as **2** explains, they are the citizens of Zion. The word rendered 'is become dim' occurs nowhere else; if the text is correct this translation may be accepted. The verb rendered 'is changed' has an Aramaic form, its correctness is dubious; Nöldeke and Löhr point differently and read 'is become odious', but Bickell's suggestion that we should delete the last consonant and take the word as an adjective meaning 'old' (*yāshān*) is preferable: 'How is the ancient gold become dim the most pure gold.' Cheyne's suggestion 'Sheba's gold' is not so easy.

stones of the sanctuary. We might also render 'holy stones.' But neither is satisfactory; the representation that at the street corners the stones of the Temple were poured out is too improbable even in a metaphor. The sense required is 'precious stones;' Budde gains it by emendation; others think the present text may be so interpreted.

2. The explanation of 1: the fine gold is the precious sons of Zion; they too are the precious stones, esteemed of no more worth than crockery made of common clay.

How are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work
of the hands of the potter!

3 Even the jackals draw out the breast, they give suck to
their young ones:
The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the
ostriches in the wilderness.

4 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the root
of his mouth for thirst:
The young children ask bread, and no man breaketh
it unto them.

5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets:
They that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.

6 For [a] the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater
than [b] the sin of Sodom,

[a] Or, *the punishment of the iniquity*
[b] Or, *the punishment of the sin*

---

3. The jackals, contemptible and greedy beasts of prey as they are, suckle their whelps; but Judah has become cruel like the ostrich. For the 'cruelty' of the ostrich cf. Job xxxix. 13–17 (with the notes). But the idea that Judah is cruel to her children is not what we expect, nor very intelligible. We expect rather that the mothers have under the pressure of famine become unnatural to their little ones, as the ostrich to her young. It is better, therefore, to read 'the daughters of my people are become cruel' (so Bickell, Budde). The change to the more familiar 'daughter of my people' was very natural.

4. The two lines refer to children in different stages. The mother withholds her breast from the child who can take no other food; while the children that can, though still unweaned, eat bread, have no one who will share the scanty supply with them. Cf. ii. 12.

5. It is disputed whether the reference is still to the children so delicately nurtured and daintily clad, or to the rich people generally, without reference to age. The second line favours the former view, if it is correctly rendered in R.V.; but several prefer to translate 'borne on scarlet,' i. e. reclining on couches or litters upholstered with stuffs dyed scarlet and therefore very costly. This favours the latter view. There is no cogent reason for choosing either.

6. The text is probably to be preferred to the margin. That

That was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands
[a] were laid upon her.
Her [b] nobles were purer than snow, they were whiter than milk, 7
They were more ruddy in body than [c] rubies, their polishing was as of sapphire:
Their visage is [d] blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: 8
Their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.
They that be slain with the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger; 9
For these [e] pine away, stricken through, for want of the fruits of the field.

---

[a] Or, *fell* See 2 Sam. iii. 29.
[b] Or, *Nazirites*
[c] †Or, *corals*
[d] Heb. *darker than blackness.*
[e] Heb. *flow away.*

---

the sin of Judah is greater than that of Sodom (cf. Ezek. xvi. 47–50, Matt. xi. 23, 24), follows from the difference in their fate; Sodom fell by a sudden catastrophe, and did not linger in pain; Judah perished in a long-drawn-out agony, from which no circumstance of horror, indignity, cruelty, and privation was missing.

no hands were laid upon her: more literally 'no hands whirled round about her.' The meaning is apparently that Sodom fell at the hand of God. Some render 'none wrung their hands;' i. e. the catastrophe was too swift to leave time for this. Ball reads, 'and their ruin tarried not.'

7, 8. In a striking contrast the poet brings out the difference between the appearance of the nobles in their time of luxurious living and in the privations of the siege. Then they were fair, handsome, and well-nourished; now unrecognizable, they are so black and shrivelled (cf. Job xxx. 30), and reduced to skin and bone (cf. Job xix. 20). The second line of 7 is difficult. The word rendered 'polishing' is more literally 'shape;' but this gives no satisfactory meaning. Of suggested emendations, Ball's 'their body was a sapphire,' and Cheyne's 'their skin glitters like coral, (even) the bright colour of their flesh' (*Enc. Bib.* 4283), may be mentioned.

nobles: the primary meaning of the word is 'Nazirites;' but it bears the wider sense here.

10 The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children;
They were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.
11 The LORD hath accomplished his fury, he hath poured out his fierce anger;
And he hath kindled a fire in Zion, which hath devoured the foundations thereof.
12 The kings of the earth believed not, neither all the inhabitants of the world,
That the adversary and the enemy should enter into the gates of Jerusalem.
13 *It is* because of the sins of her prophets, *and* the iniquities of her priests,

---

9. The swift death on the battlefield was better than the slow death by famine. In the second line Ball reads, 'For they, they passed away with a stab suddenly in the field.' The Hebrew is unusual, and the text has often been suspected.

10. Cf. ii. 20. Hunger drives even the pitiful, affectionate mothers to this desperate extremity.

11. The language of the second line is, of course, metaphorical.

12. The meaning is not that Jerusalem was too strongly fortified to be captured. The author, as is the case with other Hebrew writers, thinks of the nations as sharing the fanatical belief of the Jews, so often rebuked by Jeremiah, in the inviolability of Zion. This conviction, which went back to the preaching of Isaiah, had been greatly strengthened by the deliverance of the capital from capture by Sennacherib in 701 B.C., while the people's assurance of its good standing with Yahweh had been confirmed by its acceptance of the Deuteronomic Law. Hence the possibility that Yahweh might be so angry with His people that He would even destroy His own city, as Micah had threatened in words long remembered by the people (see Jer. xxvi. 17–19 with the notes), seemed to have passed away. The writer of this verse had obviously held this belief, against which Jeremiah so solemnly protested. He could not therefore be identified with Jeremiah.

13. It is noteworthy that the poet fixes the responsibility for Zion's fate on her religious leaders. So Jeremiah had singled out the priests and prophets (Jer. v. 31, vi. 13, xxiii. 11 ff.). The accusation in the second line adds a feature in the indictment,

That have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her.
They wander as blind men in the streets, they are polluted with blood, 14
So that men cannot touch their garments.
Depart ye, they cried unto them, Unclean! depart, depart, touch not: 15

---

which is not directly attested elsewhere. The narrative in Jer. xxvi is hardly relevant, since their desire to kill Jeremiah was due to special causes; and Jehoiakim seems to have been most to blame for the execution of Uriah.

The construction of the verse is a little difficult. It does not connect with 14, and obviously not with 12. We may either suppose that it connects with 11, the insertion of 12 between them being due to the exigencies of the acrostic scheme (so Löhr), or treat it as an independent sentence (so R.V.). The latter is much better, and we must either supply a verb (as R.V.) or preferably insert one in the Hebrew, e.g. 'they have entered' (*bā'ū*), which might easily have fallen out after 'her prophets' (so Budde). The metre gains by the insertion.

14. The passage is not quite clear; the R.V. gives the probable sense. The verse places us in the last days of Jerusalem. These priests and prophets wander blindly in the streets; they are polluted with the innocent blood they had shed in the time of their power, so that men shrink from them as they stagger by, lest they should contract ceremonial defilement from their garments.

as blind men. Löhr suspects a gloss. But there is a real point in the phrase. It depicts the helpless perplexity which has overtaken these rulers, once so confident and moving with such directness to their goal along an unscrupulous road. Now the ground is giving way beneath their feet and their universe tumbling in ruin about their ears.

15. Here those who shrank from contact with these blood-stained murderers (14), call out to them to leave the city on account of their uncleanness. The reference in 'Unclean!' seems to be to the cry of the leper (Lev. xiii. 45). It is no objection to this that it is the people, not the unclean person, who utter the cry. It is just the point that the people do utter it. The murderers, since they were not lepers, would obviously not feel under any obligation to declare themselves unclean. But the people hurl the cry at them, execrating them as no better than lepers, whose touch brought ceremonial pollution and whose lot

[a] When they fled away and wandered, men said among
the nations, They shall no more sojourn *here*.

16 The [b] anger of the Lord hath divided them; he will
no more regard them:
They respected not the persons of the priests, they
favoured not the elders.

17 Our eyes do yet fail *in looking* for our vain help:

---

[a] Or, *Yea*

[b] Heb. *face*.

---

it was to be hounded from the society of men. The verse is overladen. In the first line the words 'they cried unto them' are apparently an explanatory gloss, and the repetition of 'depart' in the second half of the line is due to dittography. The second line in its present text seems to mean that even after they had left Jerusalem and fled to foreign countries, they were not permitted to settle down. But it is too long. The simplest expedient is to strike out 'they said,' which is an explanatory gloss like that in the first line. Perhaps we should also omit 'among the nations,' which may have been a marginal gloss on 16^a. But the text is also corrupt. The word rendered 'fled away' (*nātsū*) occurs nowhere else, and its sense is very dubious. Löhr reads 'When they were pleased (*rātsū*) to wander.' But this spoils the assonance in the original; moreover one is so forcibly reminded, in reading the Hebrew, of Gen. iv. 12, 14, that we instinctively correct the text in accordance with it and substitute *nādū*, which requires no alteration in the English rendering. Thus the fate of Cain falls on those who were guilty of his sin.

A clever but too drastic restoration of 14, 15 by Cheyne may be seen in the *Enc. Bib.* 2700.

16. The fate of the murderers. Yahweh Himself has scattered them; they are driven like Cain from His presence; priests and elders though they were, no respect was shown to them. For 'elders' we should have expected 'prophets;' the LXX reads this, and in spite of the suspicion that the easier text arouses, it may be the original which has been altered in the Hebrew through the influence of v. 12.

The anger of the LORD: literally 'the face of Yahweh,' which perhaps means rather 'Yahweh Himself;' cf. Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15 (where it is rendered 'presence'), 2 Sam. xvii. 11 (see R.V. margin), Isa. lxiii. 9, Pss. xxi. 9 (margin), xxxiv. 16.

17. The poet reckons himself with those who had vainly hoped for help from Egypt, a hope which Jeremiah had emphatically declared to be groundless. See Jer. xxxvii. 5-10.

In our watching we have watched for a nation that could
not save.
They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets: 18
Our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for our end is
come.
Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the heaven: 19
They chased us upon the mountains, they laid wait for
us in the wilderness.
The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, 20
was taken in their pits;

---

watching: the word occurs only here; it is generally rendered 'watch-tower.'

18. The poet vividly describes the situation during the siege. If the R.V. is right, the point is that the besiegers commanded the streets from the siege-towers, so that it was dangerous for the inhabitants to walk about in them. But the word rendered 'streets' means 'a broad, open place,' not necessarily within the city itself. The meaning may be, that after the retreat of the Egyptians and the renewal of the siege, the inhabitants were unable to walk any longer outside the city walls.

19. It is often supposed that the passage refers, like the succeeding verse, to the capture of Zedekiah (2 Kings xxv. 4–6) and his retinue, in which the poet was himself included. This is uncertain; the reference is probably wider, and embraces all the fugitives who were captured. For the first line cf. Jer. iv. 13. The terms employed do not correspond well to the circumstances of Zedekiah's capture.

20. The metaphor from hunting is continued. It is not unusual for hunters to dig pits into which their victims may fall, sometimes to be impaled for a lingering death on the stakes they have fixed in it. The Babylonians succeeded in trapping Zedekiah. With loyal personal affection for the king on whom he had set his hopes, the poet speaks of him as 'the breath of our nostrils,' as if their continued existence was bound up with him. The phrase is an ancient one, being found in the Tel el-Amarna letters (fifteenth century B.C.), and the commentators quote a similar phrase from Seneca. The second line is thought by some to refer to the hopes entertained by the people that they might escape beyond Jordan into the mountains of Moab and Ammon (cf. Jer. xl. 11), and there under Zedekiah's government maintain an independent existence. But such an independence would have been precarious, and the

Of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live
among the nations.

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest
in the land of Uz:
The cup shall pass through unto thee also; thou shalt
be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

22 [a] The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished,
O daughter of Zion;
He will no more carry thee away into captivity:
He will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom;
He will discover thy sins.

[a] †Or, *Thine iniquity hath an end*

---

kingship but a pale counterpart of the sovereignty he had exercised. More probably the poet is thinking of their hope in former days that they would maintain their national existence in their own land under Zedekiah, though so much had been lost in the catastrophe of 597 B.C. The Targum refers the passage to Josiah, since it could not understand terms of such appreciation applied to Zedekiah. But this is forbidden by the context.

21, 22. The hatred of the Jews for Edom, caused by its exultation over the fall of Jerusalem, finds expression in several passages, some among the most lurid in Hebrew prophecy; see Isa. xxxiv, lxiii. 1-6, Ezek. xxxv, Obad. 10-15, Ps. cxxxvii. 7. In this passage the poet bids Edom make the most of its opportunity, for soon it will have to drink of the same cup of shameful humiliation, while Judah has already received its punishment. For the figure of the cup cf. Jer. xxv. 15 ff., and for the close of 21 cf. Hab. ii. 15, 16.

in the land of Uz: see note on Jer. xxv. 20, also on Job i. 1. The LXX omits 'Uz'; 'the land' might then mean Palestine, and the allusion be to the annexation of Jewish territory by Edom, to which we have a reference in Ezek. xxxv. 10-12. For this 'in our land' would be better. It is likely on metrical grounds that a word should be struck out, all the more that either 'land' or 'Uz' might readily have risen by dittography out of the other. It would perhaps be best to read 'in Uz.'

The punishment . . . accomplished. The margin should be substituted; see note on 6. Judah's sin belongs to the past, it is over and done with (cf. Isa. xl. 1); Edom's as yet remains unpunished, but Yahweh will drag it into the light and punish it.

Remember, O LORD, what is come upon us: 5
Behold, and see our reproach.
Our inheritance is turned unto strangers, 2

---

v. 1–22. THE FIFTH POEM.

This poem consists, like i, ii, and iv, of twenty-two verses, yet it is not alphabetic in its arrangement, though Ball discovers some traces of a lost acrostic. It differs from its predecessors in that it is not written in the Qina rhythm. It is, strictly speaking, a prayer, but the greater part is occupied with a description of the miseries under which the people are suffering, some in one way and some in another. This description is an integral part of the prayer, being designed to appeal to Yahweh's compassion and secure His help. The poem is apparently later than ii and iv. It is concerned not with the horrors of the siege, unless 11, 12 are to be so interpreted; but with the wretched conditions of those who are left in Palestine, a feeble remnant, deprived of their ancestral possessions, the victims of penury, forced labour, and oppression. A considerable period has elapsed since the destruction of Jerusalem; those who were children at the time have now grown to manhood, and the poet speaks in a way which implies that Yahweh's apparent indifference seems to express a settled attitude, rather than a passing cloud of displeasure (20). We may therefore with some confidence place the poem fairly late in the exilic period. Yet there is no indication of any change in the political situation. It is therefore probable that the career of Cyrus had not yet begun, or, if it had, that the author had no knowledge of it. He wrote presumably in Judaea.

The poet appeals to Yahweh to look on the affliction of the people. They have lost their homes, their fathers are in exile, their mothers no more fortunate than widows. They are grievously oppressed and serve the foreigner for bread. Their miseries are due to the sins of their forefathers, who died with their guilt unexpiated. Upstarts are their governors; their bread they win at the risk of their lives; they are fevered with famine. Women are dishonoured, princes hanged up by the hand. Young men carry the mill, boys stagger under the firewood. All joy has ceased; their crown lies in the dust. It is the penalty of their sin. Above all, they grieve for the desolation of Zion. But the throne of Yahweh abides for ever; why does He forsake and forget His people for ever? Let Him bring them back; if indeed He has not utterly rejected them.

v. 2–6. In these verses the poet describes the wretched condition of those who had been deprived of their ancestral possessions in the country districts, and had therefore to purchase what had

Our houses unto aliens.
3 We are orphans and fatherless,
Our mothers are as widows.
4 We have drunken our water for money ;
Our wood [a] is sold unto us.
5 Our pursuers are upon our necks :
We are weary, and have no rest.
6 We have given the hand to the Egyptians,

been their own, their water and their wood, either from the new possessors, or perhaps by paying a tax to the Babylonian governor (cf. i. 11). They were orphans in the sense that their fathers had been taken into exile, so that while their mothers were not literally widows, they were no better off than if they were actually so ('our mothers are as widows').

3. mothers: not a figurative expression for the cities of Judah, but literally meant, like all the expressions in this passage. Cheyne's emendation 'citadels' (*'arm*^{e}*nōthēynū*) yields a rather better assonance, but at the expense of the parallelism.

5. This is a difficult verse. The first line is strangely expressed. Frequently it has been rendered 'On our necks are we pursued;' we must suppose the meaning to be, our pursuers are hard at our heels. But the reference to pursuit is strange. The speakers belong apparently to those left behind in the land. Who should pursue them? We might think of them either as being chased out of the land, but broken wretches such as they were could hardly be politically dangerous. Or they might be attempting to escape from their evil lot, with pursuers hard after them to bring them back. This would agree with 6, but is otherwise difficult. Had the fugitives been runaway slaves, hot pursuit would have been intelligible; but this seems not to have been the case. The reference to pursuit is accordingly suspicious both in itself and the form in which it is expressed. The text is apparently corrupt. The word rendered 'upon' is identical, apart from the pointing, with the word for 'yoke.' It is probable that originally both words stood in the text, though we might simply alter the pointing and read 'the yoke of our neck' (so Ball), and that we should alter the verb. What is required is some verb expressive of the grievous pressure of the yoke, and Ball's suggestion 'they made heavy' approximates to the probable original: 'The yoke on our neck they have made heavy;' this harmonizes well with the second line.

6. The reference is not to earlier political alliances made with

---

[a] Heb. *cometh for price.*

And to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.
Our fathers have sinned, and are not; 7
And we have borne their iniquities.
Servants rule over us: 8
There is none to deliver us out of their hand.
We get our bread with the peril of our lives 9

Egypt and Assyria in the past, for this does not suit the intention of their action. Rather the point is that they have wandered into these lands to gain a livelihood by servitude, which they could not gain at home. That they should go into Egypt was natural; but the mention of Assyria causes surprise, both on account of its distance and the fact that it brought them nearer the land of their rulers. Budde thinks that originally Edom may have stood here; we should in that case explain the language in the light of the fact that the Edomites had pushed into Jewish territory (see note on iv. 21). Ball, with comparatively slight changes, eliminates the names of peoples; but also inverts the order of 5 and 6. He renders:

> 'To adversaries we submitted, Saying we shall be satisfied with bread.
> The yoke of our neck they made heavy, We toil, and no rest is allowed us.'

A rather more radical revision, though the emendations suggested are still comparatively slight, is proposed by Cheyne for the whole passage 6–10 (*Enc. Bib.* 2700). The introduction of the 'Ishmaelites' is textually more difficult than that of the 'Arabians;' and the reconstruction is bound up to some extent, though not vitally, with the author's 'North Arabian theory.' This verse he renders:

> 'We have surrendered to the Misrites,
> We have become subject to the Ishmaelites.'

7. See the discussion in the note on Jer. xxxi. 29. The poet, however, does not deny that the sufferers had participated in the sin (16); yet he traces the punishment primarily to the sins of the fathers, who had died and thus passed beyond the reach of punishment before their sin had received its due penalty. The penalty had therefore to be exacted from their successors.

8. By 'servants' or 'slaves' the poet means probably some of the minor officials, who may have been formerly slaves. Oettli compares the case of 'Tobiah the servant' (Neh. ii. 10, 19). Cheyne reads 'Arabians' (*'ărābīm* for *'ăbādīm*).

9. The general sense is plain: they earn their living at the risk of death from the Bedawin. But it is not clear whether the precise point is that they get in such harvests as they are able to

Because of the sword of the wilderness.
10 Our skin is [a] black like an oven
Because of the burning heat of famine.
11 They ravished the women in Zion,
The maidens in the cities of Judah.
12 Princes were hanged up by their hand:

[a] †Or, *hot*

---

raise, or that they tend the flocks and herds entrusted to them, in either case in peril of a sudden raid by the robbers from the desert. In favour of the former are the words 'we bring in our bread' (so literally), 'bread' being used in the sense of 'corn;' in favour of the latter the fact that they apparently had no lands of their own to cultivate.

the sword of the wilderness. The phrase has no parallel in the Old Testament. Various emendations have been suggested; the best is probably Cheyne's 'Arabian' for 'sword,' which involves a change of one consonant. He renders:

'We bring in our corn with peril of our lives
Because of the Arabian of the desert.'

(*Enc. Bib.* 2700). We may compare Jer. iii. 2.

10. The hunger from which they suffer brings on a raging fever. Cheyne's emendation of this verse gives a good sense, but requires too much change in the text.

11, 12. It is very hard to believe that the reference is to anything but the outrages which commonly accompany the capture of a city, when the soldiery have licence to satiate their lust and their greed. It is possible that the poet has in mind indignities and tortures inflicted on the hapless remnant in Palestine. But the reference to 'princes' does not favour this. On the other hand, a sudden transition from the situation hitherto described, to the incidents which attended the sack of the city is violent; and Budde believes on this ground that these verses originally formed no part of the poem.

hanged up by their hand. If the pronoun refers to the enemy, whose misdeeds are mentioned in 11, the sense may be that they impaled the princes; whether before or after death is uncertain. It is possible also to take the pronoun as referring to the princes; the meaning being that they were hung up by the hand. Such a form of torture was by no means uncommon; we may compare with it the hanging up by the thumbs, familiar in sea-stories, especially stories of pirates. The present writer inclines to this view; and suspects that this form of torture may have been

The faces of elders were not honoured.
The young men bare the mill, 13
And the children stumbled under the wood.
The elders have ceased from the gate, 14
The young men from their music.
The joy of our heart is ceased; 15
Our dance is turned into mourning.
The crown is fallen from our head: 16
Woe unto us! for we have sinned.
For this our heart is faint; 17
For these things our eyes are dim;
For the mountain of Zion, which is desolate; 18
The [a] foxes walk upon it.
Thou, O LORD, [b] abidest for ever; 19
Thy throne is from generation to generation.

[a] †Or, *jackals*

[b] Or, *sittest* as king

---

applied to princes to force them to disclose where their wealth was concealed.

elders: cf. iv. 16.

13. The young men have to carry about the heavy millstones, while the lads stagger under the load of firewood they are forced to bear. Ball reads 'Nobles endured to grind and princes stumbled under logs.'

14. See notes on ii. 10.

16. The crown: i.e. in a figurative sense, our glory and prosperity.

17. The R.V. by its punctuation takes the reference in 'For this' and 'For these things' to be to the desolation of Zion mentioned in 18 as the climax of Judah's woes. This view is probably correct; though some considerations favour a reference to what has gone before.

18. That the Temple mount has become the haunt of jackals shows that we are some time removed from its destruction.

19. Now the poet resumes the plea with God, with which the poem opens. While Yahweh's earthly home, where He sat enthroned on the cherubim, is destroyed, He lives above the reach of change, and His heavenly throne abides throughout the generations.

20 Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever,
And forsake us so long time?
21 Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned;
Renew our days as of old.
22 [a] But thou hast utterly rejected us,
Thou art very wroth against us.

[a] †Or, *Unless thou* . . . and *art &c.*

---

20. Seeing then the permanence of His dominion, why should He forget His people, when He could without effort restore them?

21. See note on Jer. xxxi. 18; but here the language seems to be meant in a spiritual sense.

22. The meaning is probably more correctly given in the margin. The poet's tone is more tentative than the R.V. text suggests; he means God surely will not entirely reject His people, and for ever maintain His alienation from them. In the synagogues, it is true, 21 was repeated after 22, that the reading might not end on the sad note of 22. A similar custom prevailed, with better reason, in Isaiah, Malachi, and Ecclesiastes.

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